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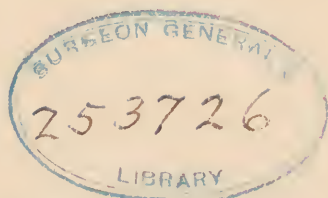


THE HOPE OF THE VARIANT

The Hope of the Variant

BY

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TO
MY WIFE
MARIAN TRUE GEHRING
WHOSE DEVOTION TO MY AIMS HAS
BEEN THE INSPIRATION
OF MY LIFE
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

The reason for sending out this book lies in the author's recognition that, owing to the unusual environment in which for thirty years he has carried on his work, he has been permitted to come into closer relations with his patients than ordinarily prevail. A limited number having been treated at a time and therefore exhaustively observed, results have been obtained which he believes demonstrate basic truths that justify their publicity.

From these years, which brought close intimacies, deep and lasting friendships have resulted, and the appeal for years from former patients from many States, that they might be allowed to follow methods by which they had been re-educated or restored into a condition of well-being, is an incentive to meet their wishes; some of whose experiences have been embodied in the structure of this book—and whose continued appreciations are giving the author an aftermath which is the reward of his life-work.

The writer seeks here to express his grateful appreciation to Dr. Frederick Peterson, of New York, whose sympathy and interest in the motive of this work place the author under deepest obligations.

BETHEL, MAINE.

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THE HOPE OF THE VARIANT

CHAPTER I

THE PURPOSE

When after many years of earnest work one lays down the brush, the chisel, the pen,—the direction of financial, political, or philanthropic enterprises,—or a professional career; happy is the man who can still look forward with enthusiastic assurance that the passion of his life may go on into greater fulfillment through the lives of others.

The object of the author in thus placing the result of his efforts before a thinking public is to make the way clearer for those interested in his line of service, remembering with what gratitude he would have received help in his early years of effort, when so much of his work lay in traversing unexplored fields,—had more pioneers left for him the practical application of principles wrought out into demonstration.

Therefore he seeks to make an earnest plea on behalf of the nobility of the Art of Medicine, without which its Science must forever fall short of its complete fulfillment, trusting that he may be able to give some degree of assistance to those who will carry on a torch which in bygone years would have lighted his way.

The author has devoted his years of practice to an

attempt at interpreting the sufferings and confusions of those who are called the "nervously ill." Not those unfortunates who are handicapped with organic disease, or the results of infectious organisms, but with those more or less obscure disturbances of the functions of the body, wherein the emotions and the general efficiency are so much involved as often to deprive the sufferer of the activities and the joy of life.

This largest number of all those who suffer ill health in functional form, the writer has called the Variants, meaning that in one way or another they vary more or less from the hypothetical or arbitrary average. But he particularly desires to be understood as meaning that the Variant may be quite rightfully within the limits of the normal, if it so be that the business of body and mind may be maintained as the result of a more intelligent direction and understanding.

The writer's attitude towards the Variant is that he can be largely re-shaped; that his structural and functional development can be emphasized or repressed; that he can be stimulated to grow in that direction wherein he appears defective and controlled wherein he is excessive.

In like manner, as so many helpful modifications may be wrought with his body, so may there be accomplished still greater helps in the developing and moulding of his mind and character, since these parts of the Variant's equipment are still more flexible and marvelously subject to environmental and educational influences.

Man is neither wholly an animal, an intelligence or a spirit, but all three, and he cannot hope to maintain his balance unless all three legs of the tripod which comprise his whole are recognized and used.

We are living in an age wherein the tendency is towards intensiveness; wherein the pursuit of the particular easily causes us to lose sight of the broader landmarks that characterize the face of nature.

Medical men are often accused by the laity of permitting themselves to succumb to the lure of their special training until it becomes obsessive, and the ailment and treatment of the patient are seen only through the perceptions that the internist, the surgeon, the orthopedist or the neurologist has specially developed. No fair-minded physician will hesitate for a moment in admitting that such danger exists, or that many an earnest medical adviser may be led into too narrowed grooves of interpretation in trying to relieve the distresses of the sufferer.

The need is obvious that we interpret the sick man from the fundamental basis of his complete equipment. That our view-point shall consider his frame, his organs, his inherited qualifications of mind and character, and his environmental possibilities. And that then, over and embracing all these, we shall keep ever in mind that incorporeal part of him, his Human Soul, which is so intimately interwoven with his destiny and which will not brook being ignored.

CHAPTER II

WHAT CONSTITUTES A VARIANT

In some sense all human beings are Variants. None may look upon himself as being wholly distinguished as symbolizing the perfect individual of his type. To vary in body, mind, and character-potentials is our common attribute, and though we wander wider in the character of one or more of our equipments than is the usual, yet such variations may be as valuable, are often a privilege, and are always legitimate.

Because of this universal law of variation it became possible for one individual to give us the talking-machine, for another the telegraph, and for still others the steam-engine, the wireless, and the telephone; and for countless others the marking of the world's progress with the milestones of their achievements in science, art, statesmanship and learning. All of these were variants from the ordinary and owed their greatness to the fact that the pendulum of some special faculty swung farther from the perpendicular in the particular direction in which they excelled, than that of other men.

Nature lavishly justifies her attraction for the student because of her infinite variety. Hers is a store

of inexhaustible resources, and a lure of endless fascinations. The speedy termination of all interest in any subject may be predicated when the limit of the possibility of its variation is in sight. Nature alone can levy perennial tribute upon the wonder and interest of man, because of the bewildering maze of diversity of forms into which she leads him. Were we to gather a hundred blades of grass from the lawn, and a hundred leaves from the oak or maple overhead, though the blades were all grass and the leaves all oak or maple, we know that not one would, in all particulars, be exactly like unto the other. Were we to sow all the seeds contained in the poppy pod which ripened in the garden the past summer, we should be likely to get as many plants as we had perfect seeds. Of these doubtless the larger number would come true as regards general resemblance to the parent in form and color, but a smaller number would begin to show a slight variation, and a few would be likely to depart quite radically in color or in the form of leaf or petal from the parent. If we sow the seeds of our favorite variety of apple and should live to see their fruit, our disappointment would be keen since not by one chance in a million should we be likely to find even one that claimed relationship to its parent, further than that it was an apple.

We know that there exist within the territory of the United States approximately some eighteen thousand species of beetles. These are grouped into families and genera and the genera contain few or many species.

Some genera contain hundreds of species, i.e., forms distinct from each other, but containing a sufficient number of characteristics in common to justify their being grouped in the common relationship of a genus. Among the millions of individuals, members of any one single species, that may occur within the territory of their distribution,—no two would be exactly alike.

Were we to take a tiny fragment of one of the chalk cliffs of England and prepare it for the microscope, we should find it composed largely of the whole or broken fragments of the calcareous particles of microscopic creatures. These once inhabited the ancient seas and their soft, gelatinous bodies secreted out of the seawater the lime which formed the protecting shell around them. These creatures, the Foramenifera (so called because the tiny structures, often very beautiful, are full of openings or foramina), are grouped likewise into families and genera and species. But of all the myriads of individuals that belong to any one species (though they would all have their structural points in common), the chalk cliffs of England would be disintegrated in vain were we to seek to find two exactly alike.

Throughout the realm of nature, beginning with the swarming myriads of organisms, invisible to the naked eye, that constitute the primordial ooze at the bottom of the seas, up through all the stages of evolution to its present culmination in man, life is a bewildering kaleidoscope of greater or lesser variations in every one of its units. Among the domestic animals, in sheep,

fowl, cattle, horses, dogs, and cats, these variations are familiar to all. Among wild animals the same holds entirely true, save that these are present to a lesser degree since man has not arbitrarily interfered with their mating.

When then we contemplate our own genus, Man, we should be prepared to meet with the manifestations of the same universal law, namely, that no matter how much the individuals of a race may resemble each other in the general characteristics of color, form, and habits, and no matter through what period of time such groups of human beings may have lived together and their peculiarities become accentuated because of environmental conditions—there will be no two who are even nearly alike.

We are able very readily to make divisions of our fellow beings into races, and as we subdivide the individuals of a race into families we can easily see in the latter the closer grouping together of similar traits, some of which may be so strongly defined as to enable us thereby to recognize the individual's family. But we know that even in the children of a common parentage there may be many points of diversity in character and form and physical fitness, and were we to search diligently enough, we should find that even twins are twins only in the sense of being couplets—and in none other.

As, then, we know ourselves to differ to some degree in all things from every other of our fellows as regards size, color, and form, without feeling that such differ-

ences necessarily involve unfitness, so may we be assured of like differences in all things pertaining to the intellectual, moral, and organic equipment without necessarily involving our suitability for life, efficiency, and happiness.

To vary is a fundamental law of nature. Because of this inherent tendency alone is it possible for life to persist upon the globe. The tendency to vary in the plant and animal is the throwing out of feelers, every single newly born individual of the organic world being more or less of an experiment to see if it be not a little better adapted to survive in its environment than its predecessor. In nature environmental changes take place usually upon a scale so vast as to involve long periods of time, and endless latitude is given organic things wherein gradually to adapt themselves. Only with man in his own affairs and wherein he interferes with those of nature, is the time period precipitated to the degree, often, of trying the patience of the patient mother of us all.

The types of humanity passing before our vision make varying impressions upon us. In the case of our friends we know them by their various attributes of mind, heart, and character,—what they are to us, to themselves, or to the community. It is their personality or ability to deliver much or little towards our interest or affection that attracts us. But with the great mass of other people who are acquaintances or strangers it is not quite the same. Here we get occasional glimpses of that other view wherein they

present themselves more as beings,—physiological and anatomical creatures. Indeed we have all in our lighter moments compared a squat, thick-necked and heavy-jawed individual, with the lower part of the face and neck greater in circumference than the vertex, with small light-colored, white-fringed eyes and a stolid manner, with what we are pleased to call a porcine type, and the wolf, the fox, the bull (as witness the time-honored sobriquet of “John Bull” to the phlegmatic Englishman) the fish and other striking types of the animal kingdom have all furnished us amusement as the fancied prototype of various individuals of our own genus.

Although it is not the purpose of the writer to venture into speculation as to the meaning of such fancied or real anatomic resemblances, it is well recognized that temperament and certain definite mental and character attributes pair themselves with certain more or less definite types of anatomical structure sufficiently often to have developed among us the recognition of a sort of natural association. Nor may we be permitted to dismiss this subject too lightly at this point, for to the discerning eye a much greater significance may be evolved from the anatomical equipment of the patient who presents himself to the physician than is often done; merely to assume that in one case as in every other, we are simply dealing with a stomach or a nervous system and that the one functions more or less perfectly than the other, is not sufficiently comprehensive.

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The diagrammatic method of teaching anatomy and physiology, as of many other subjects, must of necessity be; but one should not lose sight of the fact that it is but diagrammatic and exists but for the purpose of giving us a fulcrum or base of operations. From this average base nature reserves the right to vary endlessly and widely and is ever intolerant of any attempt of ours to confine our interpretations of her to too restricted limits.

The natural sporting and evolutionary tendencies of each individual organism carry it continually away from the arbitrarily conceived diagrammatic picture that lingers in our minds, and often perplex us sorely when we find that our established boundaries are never everywhere wholly observed. To the lack of recognition of these ever-present variants of the physiological problem which a patient presents, in the vain attempt to coerce diverse phenomena into arbitrary groups and to compare these with as arbitrary text-book standards, much of our own confusion and the continued distress of the patient may be due.

To such fundamentally erroneous concepts are owing the defects, so well although so despairingly recognized by educators, that lie at the core of all heterogeneous assembling of school children for the purpose of administering an instruction which is based upon a homogeneous premise. The individual whom such standardized dosage of instruction may happen to fit most easily, is most benefited, and all others in a descending ratio, and the greatest variant goes to the

wall. Such methods, by no means confined to the schoolroom but prevalent in all of the relations of man wherever the individual can not escape into freedom and more elastic requirements but is the victim of machine-made concepts, are, however, not wholly born of necessity, but are due to the ignoring of the greatest truth Science has ever taught us, the ever-insistent law of the Tendency to Vary.

What constitutes the standard of the normal is a much mooted question and one that should receive wide latitudes of interpretation by both our own profession and the laity. If a table be furnished of the average height of one hundred men, and another of their average weight, the deduction may be made that such average height would weigh the corresponding average of pounds, which would give a certain number of pounds weight for each inch of height. Now whereas this is perfectly true so far as the arithmetical calculation is concerned, it does not follow that if a man of any given height should weigh more or less than the mathematical average, that his weight would be so much away from the normal. The term "normal," as it would generally be used in this sense by the laity, is interpreted as meaning that which is consistent with health. It should mean that his weight may be inconsistent with the arbitrary arithmetical equation. The fact is that authorities now agree that in all tables of height-weight ratios for grown-ups or children, a ten per cent variation either way would be within normal bounds,—a fluctuation from averages within physio-

logical limits. The average winter or summer temperature of any given locality, based upon a similar method of averages, would not necessarily give us a correct interpretation of that climate.

In like manner the question of the normal of a man's mental or physical efficiency may hardly be estimated by the usual method of averages, since nature does not seem to tolerate such arbitrary standards. A man's normal can really be measured only by comparison with the potentials resident within himself and never with those of any other individual, and his normal may be defined as that *maximum degree* of energy he is capable of liberating *without undue effort*,—i.e., his maximum of easily produced energy. "A man permanently does well only that which he does easily" is a truism worthy of a second thought.

Whatever a man is capable of doing that corresponds fairly with the equipment nature has given him, both in its conscious and subconscious possibilities, justifies the assumption that he is getting out of himself that reasonable degree of efficiency to which he is entitled. No greater mistake could be made than to measure the sum of his own rendering by that of his neighbor, who may be more or less abundantly qualified and who may in his turn be realizing the maximum or less than the maximum inherent within him. He is accountable only to himself and his happiness may be much more within his own keeping than he is aware. "I weigh too much" or "I weigh too little." "I can only do half as much mental work as my neighbor." "I cannot eat

as much or sleep as well or enjoy as much as the other man," these and many more habits of comparison are too often misleading, and are sources of unhappiness to the people who have these erroneous conceptions of what they have a right to expect of themselves.

Within the wide radius wherein an elastic and tolerant mother nature allows her children to seek and find their equilibrium, we may find many divergent forms, and this is as true of the vegetable as of the animal world. Were not such latitude made possible, life upon this earth would have ceased with the moment of its appearance, since environment, itself so variable, demands from life variability, and there would have been no wonder-story of evolution from primordial cell to man.

The pendulum of the tendency to vary swings within every unit of our race, and within every individual one of that countless agglomeration of tiny cells that go to make up each unit. This is the reason we exist today, sitting in imperfect judgment in an attempt to understand it all.

We are all familiar with the diverse fate that befalls the tiny seeds of the pine, depending upon their falling upon the forest floor, upon the margin of the wood, or upon the open meadow beyond. In each case they may live and become trees,—but how unlike they will be to one another. The same fate befalls animals, not only their physical condition but their degree of cunning and their power to fend for themselves being thus variously developed. The potentials which make pos-

sible this variability and still maintain themselves are inherent. They lie in the fact that dormant possibilities are awakened when environmental conditions are favorable.

But not only do such dormant possibilities become released in response to the call of changing environment—they also are set free when for various reasons some usual method of functioning becomes retarded or even more radically suspended. The faculty of speech, which physiologists recognize as being in most instances located in the frontal lobe of the left hemisphere of the brain, has been in some cases totally destroyed in consequence of disease or injury. This faculty may be capable of being developed anew in the corresponding region of the remaining lobe which change would never have taken place had the original site remained intact.

No more familiar illustration of the presence within us of latent resources could be cited than the wonderful expansion of the other special senses when the sense of sight is for any reason destroyed. The suppression of this channel for the conveying of impressions to the consciousness from the outer world becomes gradually supplemented by an acuteness of hearing which seems almost uncanny, and by a development of the sense of touch that appears still more remarkable. In like manner when the exigencies of existence demand it, as among certain savage races, the sense of smell assumes a new significance and serves man almost as wonderfully as it does the specialized dog.

Specialization of a sense or faculty is but the result of use, and use is the outcome of necessity, and necessity but draws upon the latent potentials which are a part of the inherent tendency to vary—the provisions of nature resident in living organisms to flow their plastic selves towards the direction wherein they may find an outlet for the purpose of more fitly and surely surviving. The one-armed man develops a double usefulness in the remaining one and should this also fail him he discovers unsuspected possibilities in his feet. The natives of the steep hill countries of the Philippine Islands develop feet wherein the great toe stands off from the others much as it does in the ape, the result of the necessity of maintaining a footing upon the almost precipitous sides of the hills they inhabit—a degree of specialization that might almost become possible in a single lifetime to a white man were he correspondingly environed.

In this manner do the varying, often widely divergent equipments with which man is provided, furnish him with the power of great plasticity and permit him to save himself unto himself and his race. Since the first business of man's organism is that of self-sustainment,—the matter of nourishing itself in such sufficient manner that all subsequent functions may be permitted, it follows that in the consideration of the character of such equipment we may find a clue which may lead us to a more intelligent interpretation of his multiform degrees of efficiency. Human limitation, as *we* are too wont to interpret it, practically does not

exist within the vast latitudes of adaptation inherent in Nature's plan. We use and touch upon only the margins. We need to learn that in man variation, even though to our feeble vision seemingly a barrier, is merely Nature's eternal lure and invitation towards endless other fields of possible expansion.

CHAPTER III

VARIATION IN MAN AND ANIMALS

Properly to study any subject in nature we need an extensive series of data wherefrom to make comparisons and to observe differences, and such series is furnished ad infinitum in the individuals of our kind. Roughly dividing people into two classes we find the greater number of one class are relatively well or at least sufficiently so to permit them to fulfil their necessary duties and to live the average number of years, unless cut off by conditions of an infectious or epidemic type, by accidents, or by the culmination of vicious processes of a chronic or malignant character. Some of the above-mentioned conditions are as yet only remotely under our control and are not subject to the present discussion.

Among this large number of comparatively well people we shall find many diverse degrees of efficiency. Some individuals will be able to render a very high maximum and others may border upon the verge of a standard that seems low in comparison. They may be alike, however, in the sense that they are fairly satisfied with themselves, that they make no complaint, and are at peace with the conditions of life as they find them.

Among the other class we find those individuals who have not been able to identify themselves with the business of life; and who in their relation to affairs, to society, to their family and to themselves, have been compelled, apparently or really, sooner or later, to relinquish their claim upon their right to usefulness and happiness.

It is obvious that in the case of the first mentioned larger number the natural equipment must be of such nature and degree as to permit the conscious self to attend to outside affairs sufficiently well to be oblivious and tolerant of subjective or unconscious interferences, since otherwise the individual would at once enter the ranks of the second class, the seeming or really unfit. It is with this latter unfortunate class which is visited with more suffering, real or imagined, than a beneficent Nature could ever have intended, that the writer is particularly concerned.

In considering such unfitness we may for the present simply recognize that any interference with the unconscious pursuit of the conscious, of necessity causes a break in the automatic following of one's activities. From that moment, it depending merely upon the frequency and duration of such breaks, and upon the power and resistance possessed by the conscious, the individual's welfare may become threatened. The causes contributory to unfitness lead us back at once to a scrutiny of the factor of variability, in one or more of the patient's physical or environmental equipments. It is from this basis alone that we may hope to get a

rational clue as to the causes that have led him astray. Chief among these must be held the matter of the framework of his body and the nature and position of the organs which actuate it. We will find the anatomical variations existing in individuals to be as numerous as the units considered, and to present some striking extremes. The tall, the thin, the fat, the stocky present the commonest contrasts and ordinarily the vision would rest content with the recognition of such obvious differences.

But it follows, since such variations do exist in the length of bone and breadth of chest, in the development or non-development of fat or muscle; from an erectness of carriage with head, chest, hips, knees and feet all in perfect balance, to the opposite extreme where we see the head and shoulders thrown forward, the chest sunken, with a sagging abdomen and the legs presenting a knee-sprung appearance,—that the consequent power to endure must be a like variable quantity. To work as a day laborer or run a Marathon race, to be an oarsman or a member of a football team, and to do these things successfully, not only argues the existence of a suitable muscle and bone equipment but leads us also to look for like variations elsewhere. These we find abundantly in the character of the vital organs with which the individual is endowed. The man with a splendid digestion who can look upon all gastronomic horrors undismayed is easily recognizable. He has a wide body, correspondingly deep; his stomach is well tucked up under his diaphragm and makes no

delay in the timely digestion and passing along of its contents; he has his full allotment of small intestine which has undergone no such curtailment as may unfortunately be the case with many of the opposite type; his under jaw is wide and deep, projecting well beneath the upper, all his masticatory muscles are in evidence, whilst his dental equipment so far as his grinding teeth are concerned, is superb.

Such men are often six-cylinder engines, capable of great endurance. We see them at times in business or the professions, working interminably with no sense of fatigue, and setting a standard of work accomplished far above the physical possibilities of most of those over whom they have authority. It may be said, also, that these men see their fellows only out of the windows of their own capabilities and are often hard masters. But the opposite type unfortunately is far more frequent, from its extreme form up to innumerable intermediate stages. Of such divergent forms the most conspicuous are those characterized outwardly by a slender trunk, contracted chest walls, sagging abdomen, insufficient muscular development partaking of various unilateral irregularities and often striking departures in the posture and poise of the body which, in extreme cases, make it appear at times as though the individual were about to pitch forward.

So well recognized have these aberrant or variant types become that it is an easy matter at once to single them out in any gathering of people, civilized or savage; and even in any photographic presentation of

a group of people the type declares itself easily, even to the eyes of the inexperienced when once their attention has been called thereto. Only of late years has the significance of these outward anatomical irregularities become associated by medical men with the coexistence of equally striking internal departures from the usual. It is in these cases that there becomes revealed to us a startling chapter out of the evolutionary history of the race. Here we find relentlessly demonstrated that man's progress from the lower type to his present estate has by no means been an easy one, and that nature would seem to be exacting penalty for his aspiration in lifting himself from the four-footed to his present erect posture. It is in consequence of this upward progress that innumerable individuals (it has been estimated as many as one in five) still bear traces in varying degree of an arrangement of their abdominal organs that once must have prevailed, long before "Adam delved and Eve span," in the dawn of man's evolution.

These variations consist of all degrees and kinds of deficiencies in the suspensory attachments of the stomach, bowels, kidneys and pelvic organs, out of which arise the multitude of provocations, legitimate and illegitimate, for surgical interference. Likewise it is because of these variations in the shape, size and relations of these organs to one another, and to the manner of their attachment to the supporting bony structures of the body, that an added impulse may be given to the endless list of disorders of the stomach and

intestines, and a host of others affecting the liver, the kidneys, the heart and circulatory apparatus, the quality of the blood stream and by no means least, the sanity of the mind!

In our own race in like manner as with the lower animals, nature has gradually suffered one form of structure to become displaced by another and the lungs of the warm-blooded animal are billions of years removed from the gills of their ancestors, whilst the lower animals still crawl, or fly, or swim, or walk on all-fours. But such evolutionary advance entails the constant modifying of not only the body but its organs as well, and the appendix vermiformis, of unfavorable notoriety, long the most glaring offender as an organ of the first magnitude in the list of rudimentary remnants, has today a close rival in the large intestine, against which a list of arraignments is being brought to bear quite sufficient to class it among the suspects. Concerning both of these organs, however, the final word may not have been said and it may yet be shown that, as in the case of a delinquent man, we can often make an excellent citizen and servant out of a bad one, by putting him upon his honor and investing him with authority and responsibility, so may we, with the large intestine at least, obtain the happiest normal functioning if we look upon it with trustful confidence instead of accusing it of criminal intent!

In extenuation of Evolution as manifested today in man, it must not be forgotten that our modern civilization is persistently and aggravatingly, and never so

much as at present, hurrying Nature's more gradual processes. The speed of modern life is set at a pace which subjects all of us to the need of such rapid readjustments that many an unfortunate is obliged to retire from the race,—in more senses than one—for whom a more deliberate and rational environment would have found ample room and usefulness. It may be reasonably asserted that out of this class of individuals (those for whom environmental change and evolutionary speed are too rapid) the largest number of sufferers are recruited—and, in the writer's experience, out of which by far the larger number may be restored to a happier usefulness.

In the breeding of domestic animals man has come to recognize the significance of the value of nature's various types, and acting upon her suggestions, has accentuated them by judicious selection and breeding. It has thus become possible to breed the sheep for an increased quality and quantity of wool and mutton, the ox for beef, milk, or cream, and, in the case of the pig, the aristocratic breed of "Chester Whites" is a far cry from the plebeian razor-back of our South. With the horse the qualities that make for speed and wind are carefully studied and selected for breeding. We do not look to the race horse,—with his slender flanks, trim legs, prominent veins and deep chest and wide nostrils,—to pull the dray, since the Percheron with his massive body and legs like trunks of trees can do this infinitely better. We select and breed the domestic

fowl for her egg-laying or table qualities and the game fowl for qualities less justifiable!

In dogs the degree of variation, due to the hand of man, is infinitely more specialized as witness the bulldog, the dachs, the greyhound, the terrier and the collie. Were these widely differing breeds to be permitted to intermingle and the selection no longer to be persisted in, we would again have a dog in whom all of the above-mentioned highly accentuated peculiarities had disappeared. If we content ourselves in assuming that a dog is merely a dog after all, regardless of his breed and the well-defined qualities that go with it, and were to make demands inconsistent therewith, such as setting a bulldog to track a rabbit or to point a bird, disregarding the great imperfection of his sense of smell,—we should be quite as irrational and faulty in our sense of nature's fitness of things as were we to expect a man with tuberculous lungs to run a race, a man with a highly developed brain to content himself as a day laborer, or one with a sagging stomach to eat pork and beans and cabbage and feel happy thereafter. In the case of the above-mentioned animals we tacitly accept and expect only certain requirements. We do not look to the mastiff for the speed with which to overtake the fox, nor the Chinese toy-dog to protect our homes. But do we apply a similar good judgment in the expectations we are apt to have of ourselves, regardless of what nature may have given us as equipment? In truth we seem to suspend, too often, the perfectly good judgment exercised over our cattle and

demand the impossible of ourselves. The more or less unfit of our kind are often only this in the qualities wherein others excel—they prove many times quite fit for useful living when they have found that brawn or breadth of beam do not constitute all virtue. They may be capable of developing new fitness in other directions, even though these be not the ordinary ones, and discover that life, usefulness and enjoyment may flow out and on through many channels, even though some of the usual ones seem closed.

Our lowly prototype, the fresh-water *Amœba*, an organism consisting of a single cell, embodies within itself the power to do and be all things which the primal needs of its existence demand. In order to propel itself along it sends out and withdraws prolongations of its body; it simply wraps its plastic substance around a particle of food in order to digest it; that it may multiply, it merely divides itself into two; if it desires to pass through an opening smaller than itself it changes its form from a globular lump to an elongated and flexible finger, resuming its usual shape upon the other side. The analogy in nature holds good throughout, for we have innumerable cells in our blood-stream that do practically all of these things. This tiny creature, just discernible to the naked eye, represents in its structure all of the primal characteristics of living matter, such as are identical within the individual cells of our own bodies (save that the latter, because they live together in a community life in countless millions, have in consequence become more

specialized in order that, as becomes a higher organism, special service may be rendered. The same power of plastic adaptation resident in the lowliest forms of life and in the simplest cell, wherein if no outlet is found in one direction it merely modifies its form and seeks another, resides in us all and is at the service particularly of him who finds it difficult to tread the beaten paths; he, too, may become enabled to take another, and thereby fulfill the reason for his being.

Individuals who are unfit are often so only because they demand of themselves that they conform with the majority. They have not been taught that they need only conform with themselves. It is quite true that we come by inheritance into qualifications and disqualifications of our body structure, even as far as the quality of the brain cells themselves. We inherit family traits of ability or mediocrity, of vice and virtue, of health, disease and crime. We inherit the broad body, deep chest with its powerful machinery, as well as the flat chest with its constricted breathing power, and the digestive organs with deficient ligaments. But it is also true that we inherit something immeasurably greater than all of these. Ours is the privilege of coming into the world with the Divine Afflatus at the core of our beings, with the limitless power to vary, upward as well as downward, with the possession of the eternal principle within, which gives us latitude wherein to save ourselves!

CHAPTER IV

THE ESCAPE OF THE VARIANT

Assuming that an individual finds himself in some degree handicapped in his efficiency, we are led to inquire into the causes, whether they are of physiological or psychological origin, or both. That there may exist anatomical factors in his problem—slight or greater diversities of structure which render functioning more difficult when physiological fluctuations arise—we have been made aware, and in such case their reaction upon his psychology, i.e., upon his mental or emotional state, should not be difficult to trace. In most instances we shall find that such disturbances of the vegetative functions have become factors that are occupying the front of the consciousness, the sufferer being absorbed with the thought that he has a headache, or cannot sleep, or is depressed, or inefficient, or pursued by obsessive ideas to the degree that the symptoms, by reason of their insistent prominence in the consciousness, are having directed to *themselves* the remedial measures employed.

The neurasthenic and psychasthenic are not by any means such well-defined types as they would appear, and which flourish so conspicuously as entities in the

disease-nomenclature of the laity, and the medical profession itself is not always free from a similar too-great readiness to make distinctive appellation of such terms. If by their use we imply that the sufferer is nervously or mentally unfit to take his proper place in the ranks of the happy and useful because of his functional disability, they may be allowed in the absence of something better, but if they are interpreted as pathological states, distinct in themselves and capable of clearly defined boundaries, as tuberculosis would be regarded, we are at fault, since no such definitions are constant.

Mental and emotional states which produce in the individual exaggerated consciousness of self, are by no means confined to those who are ill or in any discernible manner handicapped by disorders of physiological function or anatomical variation, and may occur at times in any one. Nevertheless, in case of perversion of function, they are more marked in the variant and constitute the bulk of his unhappiness. As mentioned above, if an individual were permitted to pursue his affairs without being conscious of his subjective sensations, practically he would be a well person and his efficiency would be commensurate with his necessities or ambitions. If, however, there were unusual processes going on within him, either in the matter of the efficiency of his muscles, or in the chemistry of his digestion, or in the proper functioning of any other organ, so that these irregularities obtruded themselves by sensation or other disturbing results of imperfect

function upon his consciousness, the degree of his inefficiency would be apt to be proportionate.

The possibilities of such interference are latent in all men. In some they may rarely come to the surface; and such fortunate individuals may come to the end of life without having experienced a ripple upon the surface of their well-being. Such are, however, the few and are not, on this account, necessarily superior to the vast rank and file who do not ride in chaises but accomplish the journey on foot, often finding the mile-stones far enough apart and encountering the mud and dust, sunshine and shadow, all in the course of their well-earned miles. It would be easy for anyone at once to call to mind individuals who may be thus readily dispossessed of the smooth flow of their objectivity, i.e., made conscious of themselves—of their subjectivity. Most of us could thus be “dethroned” if effort enough were made.

Usually a slight degree of such dispossession readjusts itself, the individual himself not being quite aware of what has happened, save that for the moment he has lost his self-possession or his power of concentration. Many persons are unable easily to keep themselves separated from themselves—they coalesce—the objective or conscious becomes displaced by an overflow from the subjective—or unconscious—they become aware of themselves! The person who loses time in again taking up the broken threads of his attention, if interrupted in an occupation illustrates one of the commonest types of such distraction. If the inter-

ruption were carried further, or some new or imperative thought were placed before him, he might prove quite unable to pursue the original one with which he had been occupied. He would feel himself "put out"—the flanges upon the wheels of his powers of concentration were not sufficient to keep the rails in the presence of the pressure from an opposing direction. Whilst it is true that some of such peculiarities may be simply due to lack of training, there are often deeper-lying causes involved which probably have to do with a native peculiarity—a variational feature—of the anatomical, physiological, or psychological equipment.

The differences existing in our susceptibility to pain are continually brought to the physician's attention. Here, again, the one succumbs to that which would cause another scarcely to pause in what he may have been doing. Some individuals will become faint even to unconsciousness, not only upon experiencing a slight pain but even at the suggestion of pain, or at the sight of blood, or at the production of an instrument that may produce blood or pain. A strong, able-bodied man recently told the writer that he had just been bleeding from the nose so frightfully as almost to cause him to faint from loss of blood and weakness. The handkerchief being produced which he had held to his nose it was obvious that no more than a teaspoonful of blood had been lost, but its generous distribution over the entire handkerchief was quite sufficient to produce upon the sensitive individual an instantaneous succession of mental images of a greatly distorted char-

acter. The thought of a nauseous dose of medicine—such as the over-familiar castor oil—may even be capable of inducing qualms in the sensitive reader! To listen to the recital of another's pain may cause shivers of discomfort or a sinking at the epigastrium to take place in a sensitive subject—and peering over a precipice, or out of the window of a high building, or attempting to climb upon any place that changes our accustomed relation to the surrounding floor or stable ground may, by suggestion, so endanger our equilibrium as to endanger life.

We all have personal experience of this common susceptibility to being dispossessed of our objective attention through the overflow of the subjective, and examples are innumerable. Yet some of the subjects in whom the above-cited tendencies are exaggerated, get accustomed to such sensitivenesses of their makeup, adapt themselves thereto, which then merely become a part of the individual-complex, which they learn to accept as a matter of course. The readiness, however, with which such individual sensitivenesses are assimilated will depend upon their frequency and upon their similarity to those of other individuals. Were our symptoms quite unlike those of others, and had never been heard of before, we would become effectually startled, though they were quite innocent. A rarely occurring phenomenon of this kind, which does not give its possessor opportunity to recall that it has occurred before and that he has survived it, or one entirely new to his experience, may be capable of quite

disassociating him by its strangeness. In such case it would not be that the phenomenon is in itself one to be feared, but the distress arises because of the element of the unknown,—and thus is born Fear, our ancient enemy, and a powerful cause in the production of a disassociation wherein the conscious perspective is imperilled. It is this large class of sufferers who find themselves upon the outskirts of that land wherein dwells security from chronic discomfort,—wherein are the people who eat and sleep and work and enjoy and who are enabled to count upon each day and each tomorrow with serene assurance—the Variants, with whom we have to deal, and seek further into the causes that contribute to their great susceptibility to disequilibrium.

We are not forgetting that chronic functional disorders are often entitled to the suspicion of consisting of probable, though not often recognizable, modifications in the histological and chemical relations of the cell. Indeed it is quite rational that a cell which at a given moment is functioning at a high degree of efficiency, should at the same time present a definite maximum degree of biological perfection; and that in the same proportion in which such functioning may deviate from the individual's normal, we are justified in expecting the existence of an aberration in the biological and histological relations. Eventually, due to prolonged interference with perfect functioning, usually extending over a period of years, various organic and degenerative changes ensue. In some of

these, as in the scleroses, wherein the natural provision for the maintenance of functioning efficiency has reached the limit of its capacity, nature finally gives it up with the compromise of fibrous tissue,—but we know that it is a long time before her patience is exhausted and that in by far the larger number of instances she is long-suffering and forgiving.

Since recovery from functional disorder is so common,—we may even say the rule, it follows that it must be possible for a unit or group of cells to pass repeatedly from one state of functioning activity to another without necessary injury to their legitimate powers. We see this frequently illustrated in individuals who may have reached middle life with an almost life-long history of chronic disorder wherein nutrition, owing to imperfectly working digestive organs, has always been at its lowest ebb and wherein the capacity of the stomach to contain and digest food is at a minimum. The psychic powers here also seem to have become in like manner permanently disqualified, and the mental and emotional life to have given up the apparently impossible task of ever achieving such reasonable efficiency as, in the absence of objective organic disease, the patient had reason to expect. Nevertheless, as the result of moral and physical re-education, such people may be quite made over, taught to eat and sleep, work and play, and become rejuvenated in mind and body. Such frequent births into a broader life would not be possible but for the existence

of a very tenacious vital force which may slumber for many years and yet become awakened.

The psychic life, i.e., the mental and emotional, plays no small role in such re-creations, and is a lever of wonderful possibilities if employed with insight and sympathy. Skill of a highly perceptive type is needed in enlisting on behalf of the patient these subtle forces, so far removed from the militant measures of physic and surgery. It becomes necessary for the physician, above all things else, to recognize the existence of that mysterious force which can inhibit or release vital function, and then to play upon it with the finest tactile sense of the understanding! The variant cannot always charge to the faults and neglect of his early physical training that he is a semi-invalid at twenty, thirty or fifty years of age, for there are relatively few men and women, well or otherwise, whose entire childhood history does not register a continued series of errors of gross and stupid violation of what mature age would recognize as the laws of health. We have abundant instances of a delicate and fragile childhood terminating in a robust maturity, and of an apparently well immaturity culminating in but an inefficient manhood and womanhood,—all pointing to the existence of deep-lying forces that seem to work their way along paths of action and in obedience to laws that have their being in the deeps of his subconscious life.

The writer will be found guilty of the frequent repetition of the proposition that no chronic ailment of a functional character can exist without in most in-

stances involving both mind and body, either or both showing infirmity. The physical mechanism has the mental and spiritual engrafted upon it, and these invariably suffer as one. The Variant continues as such just so long as he does not know it to be his right to escape from the prison of his own non-understanding of himself. His depression and discouragement are psychic; they are the sickness of his soul. But such soul-sickness has its roots in his physical self and by means of a broader understanding wherein both are more intelligently enlisted to hopeful effort, he may extricate himself and rise to levels of happiness and purposeful life.

CHAPTER V

CROSS-CURRENTS

As we consider the possibilities of disturbances occasioned by the obtrusion of interfering, exaggerated, or unfamiliar sensations upon the consciousness, we have opening before us the vast field of the reflex or referred phenomena. For the sake of practical illustration these may be best likened to a system of intricate electric wiring wherein there has taken place a crossing of the wires. While traveling along one wire an impulse, either exaggerated in intensity or of undue prolongation, may become transmitted to one or more contiguous wires, and set up vibrations along the course of such wires, near or remote, relevant or irrelevant in character. A familiar phenomenon is that of sneezing upon venturing forth upon the dazzling, sun-illumined snow field, with its exaggerated stimulus to the visual nerves. Here the stimulus is so great that it is transferred to another group of nerve cells close by, the sneezing centre, and the individual may naturally interpret the act as the prodrome of a cold.

A relation of intense interest exists between certain forms of emotional disturbance, such as the presence of various phobias and obsessions, and the splanchnic

nerve ganglia of the abdomen. Disturbances of digestion, whether recognized or not, affecting the solar plexus, often have a direct agency in the creation or aggravation of disturbances of the emotions. Individuals suffering with obsessive ideas are fixedly convinced of their truth and of the mental nature of their disorder and may look with grave surprise upon the doctor who intimates to the contrary and to the effect that such distress of the mind may be but a transferred or reflex disturbance, that may have its origin in the muddled stream of the digestive processes!

One of the most interesting cases of reflex disturbance that has come to the writer's attention of late, may be cited here. A lady of mature years was affected by frequent complete loss of voice which might be of several hours or several days duration. There was likewise present a profound disturbance of digestion attended by anaemia, furred tongue, laden breath, loss of appetite and general intestinal torpor. Examination of the abdomen by palpation elicited the surprising fact that whenever deep pressure was made over the solar plexus, though the patient was in good voice at the time, an instant extinguishing of the latter would take place. Frequent repetitions of the experiment were always followed by the same result and the inference was justified that so apparently unrelated a phenomenon as sudden complete loss of voice, following pressure upon the trunk of the pneumogastric nerve or its branches in the abdomen, must be of reflex origin.

The strange ease with which a person may become obscured in his intellectual and emotional horizon, when disturbances arise along the course of his abdominal functioning, is one of the most frequent and distressing occurrences. All humanity appears to be subject to such victimizing—for it is no less than that, and whereas such occasions are by no means always avoidable or easily remediable, in the largest number of instances the subjects of such distresses can and should be taught to rise superior to their confusions and keep clearer lines drawn. The patient should be taught to keep in mind that the focal point of his psychic and emotional distress is invariably in his abdomen since it is there that the storm centre resides, owing to the liability of disturbance to numerous ganglia. It is not his mind, nor his soul, that is at fault; it is his disturbed chemistry, the absorption of toxic products, the pressure and pulling incident to distended or congested viscera, and, often his physician,—when he has not learned these things,—that are to blame!

Such patients, and the cases are numerous, begin to question the goodness of the Creator and to analyze their spiritual omissions with a heart-rending minuteness, when the trouble may possibly be residing in that still unexplored dark continent bounded above by the diaphragm and below by the pelvis. Because of the confusions caused by reflex agencies, obscurations of the intellectual and spiritual are pitifully common and seem to require the greatest amount of patience and

education. Here there is great need for a re-education of the individual towards the serene handling of himself, that he may recognize the existence of physical causes as being the most probable excitants of his spiritual depression. Numberless lives are made depressed, unhappy, and largely ineffectual, because of the coloring of gloom affecting the mind, the origin of which lies in all probability in some disturbances of the emotional centres! These instances range all the way from the common forms of low spirits and depression to the extremes of the melancholic conviction of unworthiness and the Unpardonable Sin. The ancients were no mean observers of the phenomena of disease when they developed the maxim that "the seat of a word "emotion" for "religion," the former being merely man's religion is in his belly!" If we substitute the the more comprehensive term, we are not far from covering the ground today, in the larger light of our understanding of the intricate complex presented by suffering humanity.

We comment upon the power of some individuals to bear great trials and strains upon their emotional life bravely, and notice their power of wholesome reaction, when at the same time they may take lesser trials and discomforts but poorly, with much unnecessary worry and depression of spirits. The explanation lies in the fact that for the larger pull upon their emotional life nature demands and exacts a prompt compensatory reaction, this reaction being so far imperative as to be taken out of the individual's hands entirely, as witness

the profound sleep and oblivion, which establishes wholesome reaction, following upon unusual emotional strain. The lesser worries and apprehensions are more poorly handled because reaction from them is more a voluntary act, depending upon the will to do so, and upon the rational understanding of the combined physical and psychical nature of the trouble.

The majority of the people who suffer are not the people who are very ill, if by this term we mean disease. They are people who are bewildered, whose physical and psychical are in a state of confusion and who do not know what is at fault and why they are unhappy. No lesson seems of greater importance than that we teach our people to recognize the intimate relations of these two great factors of our being, the almost constant association of both in the symptom complex. The confused mind merely blames itself, its environment, its misfortunes, or even the Creator, as though such confusion and the often attending depression were actual conditions of themselves, to be separately dealt with, and seems to forget wholly the inevitable connection of its psychic states with the actual disturbance and lack of functioning harmony pertaining to the abdominal viscera. No elements enter so largely into the symptom complex of chronic invalids as these of the spiritual and emotional. The author in his own practice has seen thousands of suffering people, largely labelled by themselves or their physicians as neurasthenics, some of them ill for but a short period and others for years, in whom the suffer-

ing was psychic and the causes physical. Every physician of experience can but testify to the same.

Not by any means, however, should it be implied that the remedying of such functional disorders would always necessarily be followed by the prompt clearing up of the psychic sequences. We have to face here one of the most startling facts in the study of our kind; namely, that in such cases, as the result of the long continuance of psychic aberrations, there have become established grooves of habit! Such mental habit-grooves are naturally inclined to remain and become practically separate entities, and need to be dealt with, often, quite on their own account. Among such patients there are many who would no longer know it, even if they became well! Among these we may at times quite succeed in restoring their functioning regularities and yet they may remain ill and unhappy; they have developed the habit of being conscious of themselves in abnormal ways.

It is at this juncture that such unhappy and suffering people cast about for the relief they do not obtain from their physician. And here is where they have the right to expect from us perception, intuitive understanding, and the help that can only come from the spiritual enlightenment of him into whose care they entrust their welfare. They have a right to demand relief, re-education, and a new future. We find many people who are sick at heart, weary of life, weighed down by poverty or misfortune or environment or illness or by unfortunate inheritance. There are some

who have no spiritual development, who are material and sensual, who are as animals, with all their spiritual possibilities in abeyance. There are others who have never had the opportunity to lift their heads and hearts with the courage or the understanding to say that they, too, are men and women with minds and souls as well as bodies, and to lay hold upon their inborn right to aspire and attain unto the privileges that are the lot of the more fortunate of their kind. But such spiritual poverty, induced by the sins or the ignorance of man, the remorselessness of inhibiting environment, the seeming mercilessness of the law of the survival of the fittest, need not pertain to the great multitude of people who suffer unhappiness in the more fortunate walks of life.

The unhappiness of the chronic sufferer is due to the fact that he is *somewhat* ill in his body, and *somewhat* ill in his spirit, and that he is so lamentably and inexcusably unacquainted with himself. He goes from physician to physician and some treat his body exclusively, and others say that there is nothing at fault here but that it is merely his mind; but few recognize that it may be both that are in need, and fewer still that possibly it is a still greater factor and that it may be his soul that is out of health. "Renew his courage," we say of a man who is weighed down by failure, "and he will become himself again." It may be true that we all recognize this principle in the abstract. But do we not forget that, though often enough applied to him in his relation to material things, it can so

gloriously be applied to the restoration of a man's happiness?

The illness of such people is rarely alone that of their body. In one sense it is always that. But in another it is assuredly also always the soul that is ill, the spirit of the man that has become confused and he does not know it! Let us teach him these things, for the two states, that of the body and the mind or spirit, are inseparable;—working upon each other interchangeably, combining to work accord or discord. We should not be afraid to talk to a sick man about his soul! Oftentimes the only thing a man needs, to rise into strong virile life, is to be treated as though he had one, and taught to face its needs. To the untrained mind, the interpretation of oneself is a difficult thing; it becomes infinitely easier when one develops the larger vision. We should be so busy with innumerable interests, things we would like, and others we are obliged to do, so driven by the urging of the life within us, that we have no ear for the perception of subjective sensations. As it is, it would appear that we are so vacuous, so unoccupied, so unsophisticated that we have a microscopic ear for every sensation and mood that may arise out of the subconsciousness.

A mood is a layer of psychical atmosphere, thicker or thinner, darker or brighter than usual, which is born of the body. It is the result of some change in the chemistry, some emphasized sensation, some fluctuation of the vascular pressure, an extra influx of toxins into the circulatory stream, some acceleration or re-

tardation of the inhibitory centres of the brain. It is always earth-born. But it has the subtlety of the evil one. It has the power of coloring and deceiving the consciousness so completely that the latter instantly accepts it without questioning, and admits it into its recognition as a real thing, and so it is at once transformed into a state of mind! The individual thereupon has become the victim of the mood! He is colored and actuated thereby. He accepts it with as little question as he does the weather. It is a thing that is. Since he has not reasoned himself into it, i.e., acquired it as a result of evidence, he naturally does not try to reason himself out of it. The only evidence he has is the sensation that accompanies it. It is the same with a man's politics or religion. They are often feelings and not convictions; states of mind acquired usually without challenge by the consciousness which he is therefore rarely able to defend. In much the same manner does his spirit acquire the coloring of a mood. Often is this mood no trifling matter and may well go beyond the bounds within which the consciousness has power to control. Here, only prompt and patient enlightened intervention can avail.

But much more often may it be only a matter of the understanding, of the conscious perception, and here is a state of things that should well be challenged. Once this understanding established, wherein we are taught to look upon an existing unhappy state of mind as not an entity, originating in the spirit, but rather as a distortion foisted upon us out of the ever-changing

vapors of the functioning and fluctuating organism and which we *need not* accept at all, our emancipation is at hand and we begin to be more worthy of that consciousness which allies us, above the lower organisms, to the Creative Power.

CHAPTER VI

THE BALANCE OF POWER

Man is a (*) subconscious creature first, an organism actuated by instinct in the same manner that all creatures beneath him are actuated by instinct. The lower animals differ from him in no particular whatever—so far as they go. The newly born infant for some time after its birth is quite to be compared with a puppy or a kitten, reacting to the same instinctive impulses of hunger and sleep, light and darkness, comfort and pain. If its mouth be brought into contact with the breast it will suckle, if its own tiny fist

* The author has used the terms "Objective Consciousness," "Objective Mind," "Consciousness," "Conscious Mind," interchangeably meaning thereby that part of our equipment which makes us aware of ourselves,—wherewith we reason, reflect, exercise will or judgment.

In like manner the terms "Subjective Mind" or "Subconscious Mind,"—"Subjective," "Instinctive" and "Vegetative," are used synonymously, meaning all those processes, impulses and functions of the body that go on within us without our conscious interference, direction or knowledge,—whether we wake or sleep,—which have to do with the maintenance of the life of the creature.

The terms "Consciousness" for the former definitions and the "Unconscious" for the latter, might furnish a fairly good working definition. No attempt has been made to draw fine distinctions with regard to a closer analysis of the human consciousness as distinguished from the animal, other than in such general terms as might be understood by the thoughtful reader and applied to a practical grasp of the writer's thought.

be substituted it will do the same; it has no power of discrimination and is merely a bundle of reflexes. It is only after some months that the infant begins to show signs of the dawning of that which distinguishes it from all other creatures—the beginnings of the objective consciousness. From this time on a dual development takes place wherein the subjective or instinctive pursues its inevitable course of growth, along the lines paralleled by all other animals and in pursuance to the endless chain of evolutionary impulses that reach back to the beginning of organic life upon the globe.

With the objective consciousness, however, it is vastly different. This is a relatively recent acquisition (possibly a matter of but a few millions of years) and places upon the organism that has become human a responsibility growing in magnitude with its continued development and increasing distance from the time of its birth in the remote ages. It is now that the subconscious or instinctive is no longer permitted to live the life that is purely vegetative, because of the interference of the conscious, which drives, develops and specializes it, whilst in its turn the conscious is hampered and even chained to the animal body upon which it is engrafted.

In the training of the infant quite the same processes need to be employed as in the training of the puppy. Would we teach the latter the necessary discipline which would make its membership of the family desirable, or any of the canine accomplishments, we resort only to methods of training which are subcon-

scious. If we desire the puppy to sit up, we do not explain, but with our hands place it in the sitting position. It will promptly fall over, which we expect, but without argument we as promptly restore it to the desired position, ten or a hundred times! At last, at the word of command, which will be the only word we should have used in connection with the training, the desired position is automatically taken and the trick is acquired. Quite the same processes prevail in the education of all animals, save that for the guiding hand many other methods such as hunger, pleasure, or pain may be employed.

With the young of man all early training is likewise automatic, the subjective being the only medium with which we have to deal. Only with the dawning of the consciousness and the reasoning self do we begin to appeal to this new entity and then, forever after, there goes on the double training between these often conflicting selves, with the sometimes justifiable mystification as to which promises to be the winner in the race! Could the above general principles be borne in mind in the education of ourselves, since they apply throughout our lives, an infinite amount of confusion and unhappiness might be avoided.

The author has laid particular stress upon the automatic nature and susceptibility of the instinctive self, since it is only when this fact is borne in mind that it becomes possible to interpret and deal with the latter's manifestations in health and disease. It is the office of the subjective to attend to all of the functions of the

body that pertain to its life—the processes of repair and waste, development and reproduction. It is not intended by nature that the conscious mind, the man's mental and spiritual nature, should need to concern itself with these vegetative processes unduly or to the exclusion of its own development.

Ideally these two entities that make up the whole of man should coexist and function in perfect unison. They should each pull their burden separately, yet in complete harmony so that neither is made conscious of the other through the over- or under-manifestation of either. They should be comparable with the two hands, laid palms together, so that when held up before the eyes they appear as one. The slightest shifting of the hands that would cause it to become obvious that there were two, would parallel the uneven working of the two consciousnesses when the mind and body of a man are out of harmony because of the accentuation of the one above the other. All through a man's life this duality of his vegetative or subjective, and his objective life goes on. It is, of course, not the intention of nature that there should be conflict, although in reality this is what does happen. It happens because, although his subjective functions are doubtless attending to their business, or would if not interfered with, the objective is ever prone to become conscious of subjective processes, to the confusion of both.

The subjective should be looked upon as a mechanism of high perfection and intelligence which had received, at the moment of its birth (or even concep-

tion), an impetus to carry it to the end of its journey. In addition to such impetus, it should be thought of as being endowed with the capacity to attend to all sorts of repairs and emergencies that may arise,—the power to repair mechanical injury, to produce antitoxins when invaded by the toxins of bacterial infection, to work over food for nutrition and to remove the waste of such combustion. Within certain very wide and elastic limits all such matters are attended to by the organism by reason of the energies vested within itself. Beyond certain limits, however, it must appeal to a higher court, the objective self, that the latter may protect it through the exercise of thought and reason, the peculiar function of the latter. When there is this mutual recognition of function, each consenting to work along the channels peculiar to itself, we have coordination and harmony and the well-being of the individual should be at its ideal best.

But such a condition of harmony can only prevail when the individual, by the exercise of his consciousness, knows that these two sides of himself exist, that the subjective must be entrusted with its own work, and that the objective must not interfere but remain within its own province. Farther than this, one other very wonderful fact should be understood by the man's reasoning self. This is, that although the subjective is so highly endowed, surcharged with ceaseless energy and instinctive intelligence, yet it is in some ways singularly subservient to being influenced through the channels of the mind, the organ of the objective self.

The objective self, though the flower and fruit of the subjective, being the highest product of evolution and expressing itself as man, has come to have a marvelous determining power over the latter. The subjective may thus be depressed or uplifted, inhibited or released. It is capable of having its latent potentials set free so that function goes on with a high degree of efficiency and the processes of disease overwhelmed with a flood of renewing energy—or by the inhibition of this force, all resistance on the part of the organic self may be so minimized as to permit the organism to give way before disease.

Most of the troubles of the chronic invalid, the so-called neurasthenic or psychasthenic, and hosts of disqualified and unhappy people whose efficiency has become impaired, are the result of interference between these two selves. It is difficult to say how this comes about primarily. It does not occur necessarily among the unintelligent. Laboring people, those fully concerned each day with the need of gaining their daily bread and those particularly whose occupations involve physical labor, seem less afflicted. They have not the leisure to develop the habit of consciousness of self. A certain amount of idle time, or time that is not occupied with the urgency and stress of life, would seem to make more possible the development of the habit of chronic invalidism. It would appear that with the development of the finer sensibilities an increased degree of misdirection of these becomes possible. It is instructive to see how many hypochondriacal sub-

jects may become completely diverted from the consciousness of their ailments by the sudden insistent presentation of a new and absorbing idea.

An instance in point came to the writer's attention recently wherein a gentleman who for several years had been plunged in a continuous stream of woe, and whose attention was wholly centered upon himself—upon the occurrence of a fire in the building in which he was living, suddenly forgot himself completely and for several hours was one of the foremost to rescue property, working with enthusiasm and acting like any other perfectly well man! After the subsidence of the excitement he again found leisure to take up the burden of the obsessing self-thought. In another instance under observation a gentleman of high cultivation and intelligence, similarly afflicted, upon the receipt of the news of a startling family calamity, began to get well from that hour! Instances of this kind are within everyone's observation. They but illustrate the perversion of the objective self wherein it becomes fastened to the subjective in a manner incapable of voluntary detachment. It is much like having hold with both hands of the metallic poles of a Faradic battery. Whilst the current is on, the muscles of the hands are so contracted that they cannot overcome the contraction, or be diverted to other uses. In the above and similar cases the violent substitution of another thought would seem to deflect the current of the attention from self into another direction.

A sharply stinging mustard paste applied over the

site of pain—or even at times at some other point—has given relief too many times and under too many diverse conditions not to lead us to suspect that similar juggling with the subconsciousness was at work! The rattle or picture-book suddenly held up by the sophisticated parent before the attention of the crying infant is a time-honored device, which ranks high in the unwritten textbook of parental psychology.

One chronic invalid lady, after reciting to her physician enough pains and distresses to entitle her at least to decent interment, failed to see the humor of her answer, in reply to the crafty question as to how she felt “otherwise,” that “otherwise she was quite well!” Everyone may become the victim of such conditions in himself. It is not a sign of superiority if one does not. It is merely that he happens to be so equipped as to be less easily made aware of self than another. To be thus handicapped with a too easily distracted consciousness and to suffer, and then to learn that it is in one’s power to be helped and to become able to help one’s self, and thus to become ever after infinitely more self-sustaining—is to have made an advanced step in the direction of larger living—and is in the power of by far the greater number of those who feel themselves to be helpless in the grasp of chronic invalidism.

The chronic sufferer from so-called functional nervous disorders is too often such because he continues ignorant of his possibilities. He accepts the situation and continues therein because he is not taught to know that nature does not intend that his life should

be a matter of sheer endurance, but that she is above all things, and despite all things, beneficent. It is the privilege of the Variant, if he has varied away from the status of comfort and usefulness which lies somewhere within the boundaries of the wider swinging of his pendulum, also to vary back again into this more comfortable region, and to abide there with a sense of increased security. To be a variant does not mean that one is an exile, but rather that if he does not like the region into which he finds himself to have emigrated, he may the more intelligently choose to return.

CHAPTER VII

TRAINING VERSUS TEACHING

We are thus naturally led to consider the importance hinging upon the training of children, in whom sub-conscious irregularities may be so rife. A young child is the most wonderful creature in nature, capable of responding like the most delicate musical instrument and vibrating to the slightest touch of the strings. Here is the most fruitful of all fields for our profession, which should awaken to the existence of the enormous possibilities for the moulding of the future man and woman by turning its attention to the child in whom lie potentials for good or evil, health or disease. The child is as plastic as the sculptor's clay and though it may not be so much in our power to mould its natural form into symmetry of feature or beauty of outline, those infinitely more enduring things, mind, character, and soul, are susceptible of marvelous modifications and developments.

Allowing for the natural limitations inherent within all organisms whose boundaries, by the way, we do not at all know,—the invisible barriers that would seem to hem the embryo man are susceptible of the widest expansion under the influence of perceptive teaching. It

has remained for such gifted and intuitive minds as that of Madame Montessori to perceive what psychologists and medical men have not, namely, that the child is purely an instinctive creature and should first be approached only along the avenues of its instinctive and subconscious self. Beginning with the first year of its life and from then on up to the portals of puberty, the child is a sensitive mirror reflecting first what it hears and sees, and afterwards tardily and imperfectly reasoning why.

If we were to look upon the man as being merely a mature child, carrying throughout his life—at least his subconscious life—altogether the same traits and instinctive habits that he had throughout infancy and youth—we should be helped to understand the vast significance of the importance of *training* rather than *teaching*. The indelible character of training may easily be seen in cases of illness where the consciousness or higher reasoning self is suspended and the individual reverts to simple or primitive ways of his childhood. Such acts are acquired before reasoning is developed and are automatisms—indelible imprints outlasting any of the more superficial dents made in maturer life upon the subconsciousness through the agency of the reasoning consciousness. *Training*, and talking or teaching are very dissimilar forces, hardly comparable with each other in their efficiency as regards their influence upon the shaping of conduct, which continues to hold true from childhood to the end of life. But to train rightly it is necessary to per-

ceive rightly, and correct perception of a child's needs implies some reasonable degree of understanding on the part of parent and teacher. One cannot afford to ignore the use of the intuitive faculty which is by no means a mystical sense, but merely a sharpened and coordinated use of those faculties we commonly recognize and already possess. It would be far better were the mother, in dealing with young children, entirely to lay aside the idea that she was dealing with a reasoning being since, in truth, the reasoning or objective mind is quite in abeyance.

The child is merely a bundle of very impressionable and susceptible instincts, a mirror of many facets, catching and again reflecting impressions from all sources. The parents themselves, and all that occurs around, are the sources of the impressions; and what they so unconsciously—and often so heedlessly—give out, become the subtle moulding forces upon the child, which go so far in determining what the future man or woman is to be. It is a never-ceasing wonder that so many grown men and women have evolved into normal and useful members of society. Indeed the writer would qualify the word normal into relatively normal, because the majority of us do bear the stigmata of just such imperfect training or neglect. But to whatever degree of normality we may have attained, the result can hardly be attributed to the thought and care exercised by the parents during the plastic years, but rather to the belated restricting and restraining forces brought to bear in school and through contact with the rest of

humanity. Much care is often exercised in the disciplining of the favorite dog or cat that is singled out to become a member of the family, with the privileges of the home or boudoir, but not nearly as much, oftentimes, over the infant son or daughter. The effects of such neglect of discipline are often tolerated in the child to a censurable degree, when they would not be for a moment were the dog or cat similarly guilty.

The little child differs in no respect from the puppy or kitten since it is also singularly an instinctive creature and responds to a similar training. It is utterly plastic and as capable of doing the wrong as the right thing. It is indeed quite the same to the child whether it be allowed to act wrongly or rightly since it has no reason and therefore no judgment. We do not expect judgment in the puppy; we simply insist, until accomplished, that it should sit up or charge or bring the ball or handkerchief, and do not rely upon its sense of the fitness of things.

But in our dealings with the child we are hampered by a confusion of interpretation. Somewhere in our own consciousness exists a feeling that because this is our own child, and because *we* know, it also must know! This is a fallacy accountable only because we take no earnest thought and are inclined to treat the mysterious process of "growing up" as though some subtle and providential moulding power were at work in the child's behalf, be we as blundering and fatuous as we may. Fortunately for us this latter is in a

measure true, but it is the moulding force of accident or a reasonably safe environment which operates so many times favorably in the child's behalf, despite the obstructive purblindness of the parents. We trust to the child's playmates, those brought up in a similar way by similarly unperceptive parents, to its teachers, who often give the first real training the child has received, and to its contact in later years with the world of humanity. Few parents know to what dangers the average child is subjected through contact with other children. Their own personal experiences, if reflected upon, should arouse their interest in and caution for their own.

The above needs of discipline apply to all children in the everyday and ordinary course of their development, but should the child show peculiarities and sensitivenesses out of the ordinary, the greater and more imperative the need for their prompt modification. In so simple a matter as an avoidance of any one or more particular articles of food, we can perceive the birth of a bias of the subjective self. Whatever the mother, either by act or speech, may especially like or dislike, is often perfectly reflected in the child. It may, for example, be a dislike for fish concerning which the parent expresses a positive feeling and from which she very objectively abstains; the child is capable of absorbing this notion as greedily as though it were the measles and forthwith forever after may avoid fish without knowing any reason therefor, yielding merely to the feeling.

It may be that the child is naturally sensitive in its emotional equipment and is easily moved to tears or anger or sulkiness, in which case all of these faults will the more easily be reflected upon it by either parent. If it be the parent who is thus at fault, reflecting his own shortcomings, the remedy should be an easy one. Should it, however, be due to the child's own equip-mental instability that it yields to emotion and passion, what great need does there not exist that it should be wisely and patiently trained just at this particular juncture when still upon the parting of the ways?

The author is thus laying particular stress upon the word "train," since it is training and not teaching that is required. Teaching implies an appeal to the understanding and the latter exists but in embryo. Training can be begun from the day of the infant's birth and has to deal only with the instinctive, which will do what we put it into the way of doing to the end of its life.

Of so primal a function as that of the bowels, results of the observance of regularity must have brought themselves to the attention of even the most thoughtless. But it does not seem to be recognized that so many others of our functions are equally receptive of the most rigid discipline. What is the regularly recurring sensation of hunger or discomfort at such hours at which we are accustomed to take our meals, when this periodic act is omitted for any reason, farther than an expression of habit acquired? It would be easy to accustom ourselves to one or six meals a day with a

corresponding adaptation of our sensations. We as regularly acquire the habit of dressing or undressing in a perfectly observed automatic routine. Doubtless the greater number of people put on either the left or the right shoe or stocking first and if the wrong one be laid hold upon by accident it is usually dropped and the accustomed one substituted. A popular superstition applies here which takes account of the violation of whatever may be the accustomed habit of getting out of bed: "he got out of the wrong side of the bed"—being an attempted explanation of any irritability of temper or other irregular or unusual phenomenon in the supposedly unlucky person's day. In putting on a coat nearly every one puts the same arm into the sleeve first, although he may not know it. The observance of a regular time in the 24 hours for sleep is a habit reaching back into the dawn of our existence, merely based upon the obvious fact that there was least to do at night in the matter of obtaining the means of subsistence, but even now capable of being modified and even reversed, if the individual's needs require it.

Among the above citations some are obviously merely muscular acts, first instigated by the will and then becoming practically automatic. But similar automatisms may be established with the involuntary muscles such as those of the stomach, bowels and bladder. In such case the initiative arises from within, from the physiological promptings which knock at the door of the consciousness to arouse its attention—

whereupon it rests with the latter to pay heed and to lend its directing power. It has thus become a matter of intelligent perception and we should understand that it is quite within our province to assume the role of intelligent direction. Thus, we can do almost anything we please by rightly beginning with the child in the training of the function of digestion, which is so purely an instinctive automatism. Like the bowel the stomach is an organ which has a marvellous intelligence, although this is purely subjective. It is quite possible for some individuals to reverse at will the direction of the peristaltic waves of the stomach and cause it to empty its contents upward, and this without the slightest distress. Others less gifted by nature may acquire the art; and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the ancient Romans, among whom a vomitorium was a necessary adjunct to a banqueting hall, had made great progress in the direction of this accomplishment.

The word "intelligence," used in connection with the functioning of the above organs, is meant to imply a subconscious reaction to stimuli and is in some instances a reaction upon which the life of the individual may depend. This is observable in some of the lower animals as well as in man, wherein we observe the prompt manner in which a stomach or intestine, burdened with an irritating or even poisonous substance, may promptly relieve itself of the offending presence. But such involuntary intelligence is further supplemented by an acquired one, which is the result

of training. These organs, like the puppy,—like-wise an instinctive or subjective organism—will do anything in reason that we train them to do. If a woman of mature years appears before the physician with a stomach whose entire capacity is that of a half pint, and who has never in her life eaten more than would sustain a canary bird, and has developed in consequence an attenuation of all her physical capacities, it is because she was permitted to begin and perpetuate such habits from childhood.

The stomach of a child from the beginning should be trained to accept a variety of reasonable kinds of food, if there be no mechanical peculiarity to prevent it. Should there be conditions present forbidding the above, then again the training should be directed toward the ingestion of such food as proves itself adaptable, and none other. In either case training is essential and all haphazard ways incline toward future troubles. The advantages to such a rationally trained person in future life are obvious, for the habits thus acquired become subconscious automatisms that are bulwarks of strength operating mechanically in the individual's behalf.

In the writer's youth there was much interest manifested by adults and physicians in a new kind of flour named after Dr. Graham, its publicist. This flour contained some of the coarser and outer parts of the wheat kernel and has appeared again in our time in a modified form, known as "whole wheat flour." Though such preparation of the wheat may have been an ex-

cellent thing in itself, it was lauded as a sovereign remedy for "dyspepsia," particularly if the product were eaten exclusively. The instance of one man is remembered in particular who appeared to be in the last stage of emaciation and who declared himself able to get along with only two Graham crackers at each meal! This man, upon the subsequent post mortem findings, had no evidence of organic disease and need not have died from starvation. Over a long period of years he did have a difficult digestion or a "dyspepsia," and he had reduced the capacity of his stomach to that of an infant and its size and muscular development proportionally. He might as easily have trained and built it up to do the work of a man's stomach.

The bowel also is an organ capable of being trained to a large degree to function as suits one's convenience. This was indeed undoubtedly nature's intention when, during some millions of years, man's colon was assuming its present character. It became a reservoir or pouch for the very reason that the exigencies of life besetting its owner required that he should choose his own time and convenience for the discharge of its contents. It became somewhat under the control of the will by reason of the emergencies of existence and it can be literally "led" (trained) to do what is its function to do at such time as suits our convenience. No chapter in the work of Dr. DuBois is of more value than his graphic description of his talks with his patients concerning this matter. Parents should be

informed and teach their child that the bowel is an organ that has an intelligence of its own; that it should be talked to, figuratively, believed in and encouraged. That it should be caused to make the attempt to evacuate itself at absolutely regular times, and that if then not successful no subsequent impulse should be yielded to that day. The next day the same regular routine should be observed. Naturally during that time no laxatives should be taken since this would be an open confession of disbelief in the bowel's ability to act for itself. The action of laxatives is at best but a bungling attempt to stimulate a sluggish bowel to greater peristalsis, and if this natural work is taken away from the organ and artificial means substituted it will sulk and go into retirement so far as any natural impulse towards activity is concerned.

It is amazing what results may be obtained with many individuals through the institution of this method of training. The writer once kept a record of forty selected cases of chronic constipation, cases not due to obstructive conditions owing to ptosis or flexure, and obtained over seventy-five percent of successful results. One of these cases, in an elderly lady, had been of forty years standing. Some of these relapsed again but always owing to neglect of the observance of the proper precautions, such as resorting to the old habit of taking drugs, or yielding to the stress of inconvenience when the physiological prompting of the impulse should be heeded, together with the great force of the older habit of irregularity. Even when suffering

a relapse some of these backsliders were easily able to recover themselves. But it is not meant to assert that the return of such automatic functioning is always possible, or always sufficient, since there may be many conditions wherein the use of intestinal stimulants or disinfectants may be required, over and above what the bowel might be able to do for itself.

The process of habit-formation in a child takes naturally a twofold channel; the one concerning itself with the establishment of such rational physiological routine as will best develop and maintain its physical well-being, the other taking the direction of the development of all things pertaining to its mental and moral health, and consequent happiness. Confusion is more often the rule than otherwise as to the relative significance of the above several ends. The real happiness of the child is never attained through the withholding of wise discipline, which is merely another word for training. No child is so wholesomely happy as the one that is trained to work or study in alternation with its play. The long summer vacation of our public schools, wherein an excessive dosage of play or idleness is enforced upon the child, is as ill-judged as the still longer period of strenuous study with its insufficient opportunity for relaxation and alternation of interests. Always, in desiring to obtain the greatest happiness for the child, should it be remembered that discipline, training and obedience are terms synonymous with happiness, all of them concerned in the

establishment of such habits as our human experience has shown to promote the maximum amount of good.

The unhappy child, which becomes the unhappy adult, is the one permitted to be at the mercy of an untrained will, or of the vagrant impulses that are continually arising within the aimless subconscious functionings of the animal self. Only the busy child is ideal in this respect, because for him the day does not contain hours enough for all the things he wishes to do. But since not all children are thus fortunately endowed, the need is paramount that a superior intelligence should furnish the direction of that training which shall enable the will to fall into lines of desirable habit.

The complexity of the human physical and psychical processes can often be the more easily understood by observing the simpler phenomena occurring among the lower animals associated with man. A well-trained dog, one who is taught to exercise his faculty of obedience in many diverse directions, who is taught various accomplishments and kept busy in maintaining them, is an infinitely happier dog in consequence. Men fond of dogs and accustomed to having them in their constant companionship, bear abundant testimony to this effect. The inference is amply justified that, given a creature endowed with the potentials for a great variety of functioning, such as we know to exist in some of the domestic animals and to a greater degree in the child, the law of its being demands that the opportunity for such functioning must be provided

and maintained, if the maximum happiness of that creature be desired.

The little human animal contains within itself a seething, boiling mass of impulses, most of them at first quite indeterminate as to their direction but eager to take whatever shape may be thrust upon them or they may be led to follow. The little motherless chick, hatched in an incubator and its virgin subconsciousness therefore an as yet unexposed photographic plate as regards the first impressions yet to come, does not know how to eat until its eyes observe some glittering particle amongst grains of sand at its feet. It makes a few vague pecks with its bill and some of the surrounding chicks, seeing this action, are stimulated to imitation of the same, and thus there becomes awakened the vast machinery of latent instinctive impulse which quickly causes the act of swallowing to follow, and the feet to scratch, discovering still other particles, and the routine of eating and digestion has been released for the rest of its life. Not having a mother hen for its nurse and trainer, the little atom of imitativeness follows with instinctive impulse the huge feet of its human caretaker with the same implicit obedience that it would the hen, showing preference for the latter only in case she be permitted to enter the field of competition.

This illustration is given merely to point to the enormous significance of training, and the imperative necessity of *directing* that huge mass of inherited potential forces, which comprise nine hundred and

ninety-nine one thousandth parts of our being, almost the sum total of what man is, since he is merely the condensation of all life that has gone before which has been nearly all subconscious and instinctive. If then a child should have a habit of sticking its thumb into its mouth—which might even be considered amusing by its parent—it is an automatism which may become formidable and result in some instances in one of nail-biting in the young woman, a by no means desirable accomplishment and one significant of possible other stigmata of equipmental inferiority. The writer knows of one little girl who always insisted upon clasping the maternal ear in her hand, when near her mother, a habit still not wholly overcome when she married and the cause of no little embarrassment. So great is the force of the impulses acquired by subconscious and instinctive automatisms that they may become, unchecked, as resistless as the march of a Juggernaut—and yet in their infancy these same impulses may be shaped with a touch as light as that of the inspired sculptor on his clay.

It is in childhood that all sexual perversions and abuses have their beginning and these are as wholly innocent in their incipency as may be the habit of sucking the thumb. Ever does the young organism lend a listening ear and an excessively susceptible perception to impulses that arise from the whirling, urging mass within and that come to it equally through the developing special senses of sight, hearing and touch from without and thus are made the earliest impres-

sions upon the virgin subconscious memory, impressions which, because they are the first, have the right of way over all subsequent ones; and if undesirable, increasingly difficult of effacement. Here in this field is true creative work for the parent, the highest privilege God has given him, for it is not the authorship of its being that is a virtue but the exploitation of the wonders of its possibilities.

At the formative period, when the earliest impressions pour in a hurrying and bewildering stream upon the plastic subconsciousness, there are numberless fragmentary and incomplete ones which are only partly understood; and in these lie the beginnings of many of the subsequent phobias and obsessions of after life which harass the happiness of many an otherwise well person. Could these but be promptly recognized and intelligently modified or explained away, they would often disappear as easily as they came. If we scan the literature upon the teaching and methods of the modern practice of psycho-analysis we shall observe that all inquiries are persistently directed toward ascertaining what may have happened to the patient in childhood, for it is back in these early formative years that the initial cause of the adult phobia is sought—and often found.

It is true that we do indeed spend a large part of our adult lives in trying to overcome the faulty acquisitions and habits of our childhood. What parent does not know the far-reaching effects produced upon the child through the bug-a-boo and fear-of-the-dark

teachings of ignorant and superstitious nurses or associates. From early childhood many an adult brings with him the fear of the harmless snake, and the innocent dragon-fly still awakens subconscious memories of malignant sartorial designs upon our ears; whilst many a dignified matron instinctively raises her hands to protect her hair if an adventurous bat is lured into the house in its quest for toothsome gnats!

Thus it is, then, that to an enormous extent the parent has the child's whole and momentous future subject to the shaping of his own understanding. It is quite the same with the moral as with the physical—both are alike wondrously plastic. It is so easy to develop in a child a universal distrust and suspicion of the motives of people—it needing only that one parent cherishes such feelings himself and ventilates such views to the other often enough in the child's presence. Thus is readily produced a pessimist and the blight upon the character of him who sees always an ulterior motive in the actions of his fellow man. "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage-patch" could have produced only optimists among her brood. A spirit of obedience and emulation, if it be lacking, may as easily be dealt out to the child, at the table or in the family circle, as the passing of the bread and butter. Judicious and tactful comment, by one parent to the other, in the child's presence, upon some good and commendable thing the child has really done, is all that is needed to arouse a further desire for such praise in their offspring.

Praise and blame, when wisely administered, are

arouse a further desire for such praise in their offspring. one and the less of the other. To blame a child first in an attempt to correct a fault is unpardonably stupid and is wholly comparable with the action of the man who beats a dumb animal because it shows no greater intelligence than his own. There is always an opportunity to praise somewhere and would we prevent the closing of the doors that lead to the entrance of our efforts at correction we must not begin with blame, needing only to imagine ourselves as the recipient to realize the significance of the caution. The less savory morsels of correction will always find easy entrance upon the margin of the consciousness, upon the sub-consciousness in fact, when the former is held at attention by the welcome (exaggerated, even, if need be) words of approval.

Would we indeed literally plant seeds of certain fruition in the mind and character of our children; would we have fair and wholesome fruit instead of the unsymmetrical which the haphazard of environment will give us, let us bear in mind that we are little likely to accomplish much unless we observe that direct instruction or command are vastly inferior methods to those of training. If we remember, over and over again, that the little subjective organism demands nothing so much as training; that we recognize with stern self-knowledge that it is what we are ourselves, what we say to other adults across the table and by the fireside, how we look and how we act in the presence of the keenly alive and sensitive little mass of protoplasm,

that is photographed indelibly with lightning speed upon its character,—we shall come into a reward that is above all others, for we have been engaged in shaping and directing the beginnings of an immortal soul. “What you are, shouts so, that I can not hear what you say” was long ago recorded by the Sage of Concord.

CHAPTER VIII

THE VARIANT'S START IN LIFE

After the home-environmental obligations are recognized and met, the consequential and final obligation the parent owes his child lies in the wise choice of its educational environment. This is embodied in the selection of teachers with the right methods and ideals, and in the association-influences created by its school companions. These things apply quite as much to the child that may be considered normal as to the less usual or variant one. The so-called "normal" child is not necessarily always one better qualified for happiness or usefulness, it is only one that comes nearer the mathematical or arbitrary average in its physical or mental or emotional equipment—much like the child with the "average" foot which can the more easily be fitted in the shop with the "average" shoe. But every being born into this human world has the right to have its peculiarities particularly considered and in the case of the child born into the world with a feeble constitution, an impaired digestion, an instability of the nervous system, or any idiosyncrasies of taste, inclination or bent of mind—special help and considerations are a logical imperative.

The whole career of such a child demands, to a greater degree than that of the "usual" child, selective education. Because a child has the stigma of being considered "delicate," it does not necessarily follow that little should be required of its mentality. A less robust body than that of another does not need to imply inferiority in the business of life, and we must not permit ourselves to dwell under the mistaken idea that if a child cannot do as much with its body as another, that it may not do as much or even more with its mind. A "delicate" body may quite easily be made into and kept a well body, even though the ranks of the foot-ball team be not reinforced. If only intelligent efforts be made to see to it that the irregular or variant child gets all the help it needs to keep its body up to its *own* individual and peculiar standard of normal, we may then freely go ahead and give the more attention to its mental training than to that of the more evenly equipped brother, in order to develop the inequalities, the result often proving that the child seemingly poorly equipped by nature is the one who wins the race.

There is one great fundamental law that lies at the base of all developed life, physical or intellectual, namely: the law of overcoming resistance. The weak and flabby muscles of the mind and will must be developed and caused to grow by persistent effort, as much as those of the body. If the body appears to have undue limitations, these should not be accepted as final but should be developed as far as the equip-

ment makes possible, and then the more attention should be given to the expansion of the character and mental equipment. The man or woman who at middle life is an invalid is far too often such as the result of a misdirected or unwisely indulged and neglected childhood. Because the languid, fretful, bored child is a difficult pupil to help, instead of receiving a passion of zeal, it is permitted to take its own course, make its own limitations, and therefore suffer with a prolonged life of invalidism of the mind and character. The character-onesided derelicts that drift through all the highways of life in such pathetic numbers bear eloquent testimony to such neglects that might have been avoided.

We see the results of such misdirection sufficiently often in the case of individuals who in childhood suffered from disease of the hip-joint or the spine. There is truly no more pitiful object than the emaciated body of a child, confined for months or even years to its bed, harnessed to braces or plaster jackets or pulley-weights through all the interminable months, with all the pleasures so legitimate to its young life, denied. All the mother-love yearns over the poor sufferer and is lavished in reckless abandon. All sacrifices are made for it, all possible indulgences allowed. Even the just rights of its sisters and brothers are sacrificed, if by so doing anything can add aught to the greater contentment of the invalid. Its peevishness is hushed, its languid interest stimulated by unheard-of concessions.

The family life shapes itself around the sick body and the worn spirit of the unfortunate cripple.

Not one of us but would feel the same, nor escape the danger of doing a still greater injury to the child already stricken by causes that were beyond our control. It is an utterly human instinct, the first primal impulse to lavish love and devotion, that stirs our deepest emotions. But, alas! this impulse is at the best only an emotion! It is a feeling which so dominates us, and a feeling is by no means at all times the safest guide to every course of action. We owe the unfortunate infinitely more than this. We owe it judgment and that far-sighted look into the future which can recognize that when the present disease has run its course, there will be long years wherein the grown man or woman will need the sanity and self-control which will enable him to live, happily and usefully. The boy or girl, by reason of variations or imperfections or irregularities of physical or mental development not readily fitting into the conventional channels of training, may be unfortunate far less because of the accident of equipment with such variations, than because of the fate that has equipped it with undiscerning parents and teachers! On the other hand we are encouraged by seeing that many a trained mind and character even in middle life, has saved a feeble body from bed-ridden invalidism, so that both body and mind have finally come up into a joyful partnership.

Whatever teachers or schools are selected for the variant child, one vital thing must be insisted upon,

namely: that the power of overcoming obstacles shall be inculcated! It is with great ingenuity that the teaching world is making fine record of "reading without tears," and with this spirit of modern comprehension of the infant mind the writer is wholly in sympathy. But his long years spent in the re-education of adults have taught him that those patients from whom he has the right to expect most, come from a class in whom the early set of the brain and direction of the will were shaped and trained, to hold as a dominant force, the brave, bright, expectant and overcoming attitude towards *obstacles*.

It is somewhat a question as to what sort of a spirit it is that walks side by side with the child that is taught that all lessons are plays, to whom concentration only comes when it is amused. This is the child which naturally will bring itself up against a duty or task only when it wishes to, and not at all as readily because it should. The point must here again be made that it does not at all matter what things the child learns as the result of the training and disciplining of the will, it only matters that it *is trained* to use the will—or its power of application—that first and most important of all the implements of character. It must have been something very virile, very un-superficial that gave the hard-working youth of early New England his hold upon life; a hold that has never been equalled when compared with that of the youth whose paths up the hill of knowledge have always been strewn with flowers.

With the greatest enthusiasm for all the progressive forms of imparting knowledge, we would urge with all possible force the vital necessity of giving the muscles of the mind, and even more the will, of a child needing special care, an increased training towards making resolute *effort*. Let us make the lesson as gay as we have the power or the charm to impress, interesting above all things; let us conceal the drudgery as much as possible; but we need to surround with a bright and hopeful *halo* a *real task*. This is something that can be accomplished only by effort and needs a full dash of zeal and inspiration, so that we glory in the work. By bridging with closer readjustment every gap that threatens failure, so that the child never knows defeat, we find the key-note to the child's future healthful attitude of mind attained.

With patience based upon such teaching the result will be beyond expectation. For this the plea is made that the little variant, the unusual child, the seemingly handicapped one, shall not be condemned to the ranks of the unhappy and inadequate; that it shall receive greater attention and the more conscientious devotion to its first great need, the exercise of the power to grow and overcome obstacles. Such overcoming brings with it a conscious joy to every child-mind and with it a marked improvement to its body,—for conquest is a wonderful stimulant.

The overcoming of the resistances offered by undisciplined faculties of mind, or traits of character, is after all a relatively simple thing! It seems difficult

merely in direct proportion to the amount of time and attention we give it. Let anyone honestly question himself as to his own conduct when brought face to face with a task or duty that to him is irksome, he will find that his invariable impulse, too often followed by action, will be to turn away therefrom after the briefest period of time. The horse that is permitted to turn away each time it shies at a harmless object continues to shy throughout all its impaired life. In quite the same way, the duty we find difficult we shall forever continue to find difficult,—until such time as we calmly seat ourselves before it and *train* the stupid undisciplined animal self to grow familiar therewith and then eventually discover that instead of adamant the wall is putty!

There are men who achieve success in the apparently difficult task of training animals to do things which to the uninitiated seem no less than marvellous. These men may be unlettered but they are none the less keenly perceptive. They recognize that animals do not have reason wherewith to deal, or what we commonly call intelligence as the result of a reasoning process and they are not hampered by confusing intellect with instinct, but merely confine themselves wholly and single-mindedly to the *training* of the dumb subconsciousness. In exactly the same manner can we, by means of our will, *lead* our unreasoning subconscious self up to the irksome but needful task, and *train* it to do that easily which may to us naturally be so hard.

In quite the same manner as we are afflicted with a phobia in adult life, so are we intimidated to turning away from a duty or a task or anything for which we feel we have no aptitude, in childhood. We blindfold a horse before leading him from a burning stable, that he may be led forth in safety and that fear may not paralyse his muscles; we shrink from the edge of a precipice that fearsome imagination may not overcome our power of muscular equilibrium; we do the above unusual things merely because the occasion is unusual. But in the disciplining of ourselves for the daily emergencies of life we should know that our only safety lies in never once permitting ourselves to be frightened away from any obstacle whose kind is constantly recurring upon our path. If we lack the will to promptly attack, just to sit down in front of the obstacle at first has a wonderful power of intimidation upon it and develops an equally wonderful power of growing courage in oneself. We soon find that we are encouraged to draw our chair up nearer and then, if we cared only a fraction as much for the acquiring of a desirable trait of character as we did for the mere accomplishment of playing the piano, or even a modern dance, we should become master of the thing desired.

Running as an ever-present guiding thread through all the maze of childhood education, passing theories and methods and fads encamped in ever-changing forms and numbers by the wayside, there should always be kept in plainest sight the simplest and greatest of all methods—to recognize the cardinal things of

value that go to make up useful and happy life—and then *train* and *train* and *train* in these things, and argue and reason with the child afterward! We adults always train throughout our entire life, merely substituting our own developed understanding and will wherewith to lead our subconscious selves to the development desired, in place of the parent or teacher for the child—and this one great principle is all that is involved for the making of a balanced, all-round man or woman.

CHAPTER IX

OBSESSIVE IDEAS

In the battle with phobias no direct, frontal attack in the attempt to displace, avails. The enemy must always be outflanked, or in some way approached indirectly.

A young man of twenty, of robust habit and excellent mental attainments, was obsessed with the conviction that there was water running down upon the inside of his skull! He had no argument to offer in support of his extraordinary statement but was simply absolutely convinced that such was the case. Although the author knew from experience that no argument he could bring to bear would have the slightest effect in dislodging the obsessive idea, he yet essayed the pleasantry that there were no anatomical cases on record wherein nature had provided a place in the cranium for such hydrostatic phenomena; likewise that there was room for much legitimate speculation as to where the continuous stream of water might come from and go to! The only reply the patient could give was that concerning these things he did not know—he only knew that he felt it running down and that this must be proof conclusive. In this case, as in

practically all others where obsessive concepts occur, argument with the patient is utterly futile. The reason for this becomes at once apparent if we realize that the patient has never arrived at his conviction in consequence of any process of reasoning; he has come into it through the channels of feeling. Where a feeling is thus dominant it is like a colored glass held closely in front of the eyes—all things which he sees are colored. He does not even see one rift of ordinary daylight with which to make comparisons.

The treatment of this patient, who became entirely well in a few months and resumed his college course, consisted in the correction of his digestion which was noticeably disturbed, and a series of treatments by suggestion given when in a semi-hypnotic state. Prior to this treatment the patient was told that no remarks would be directed to his conscious or reasoning self since his affection was a matter of the subconsciousness; that the subconscious self was capable of having an obsessive idea displaced by a rational one, by positive statements directed to it, and that so far as his objective self was concerned in the process it was to consider itself as excused. At no subsequent time was the patient argued with about his obsessive idea.

Another case of a similar character is that of the man who was utterly convinced that he was being spied upon and followed up by emissaries of an insane hospital. Whilst suffering from digestive disorders and doubtless manifesting signs of a beginning consciousness of vegetative disturbances, he had been

examined by an alienist. This examination furnished the nucleus for the obsessive idea mentioned above, which subsequently developed. The patient was convinced that he was being spied upon through the key-hole and listened to through the walls and ceiling of his room. In walking upon the street he would frequently cast furtive looks behind him, and one moment's conversation would show the absurdity of attempting to dislodge his idea by discussion or argument. This man was treated by giving proper attention to the obvious focus of the primary disturbance—his disordered digestion, and by the added prescription of liberal doses of exercise at the wood-pile. In three weeks, when questioned as to whether he still felt himself being spied upon, he replied, with more force than elegance, that he was, "but didn't care a darn," and a few weeks later the whole idea of persecution had disappeared.

In these two instances, brought in for the purpose of illustrating practical detail, the focal point of disturbance was obvious, although it is by no means so clear in other cases. But in the case of neither had the above clearly marked disturbances of digestive physiology been recognized or treated as the probable basic cause, which is the point the author would make. These men had merely become the unconscious victims of a "feeling" that had slipped itself over them, which seemed so real and urgent that there was no perspective left and the reality of which they accepted without question. Had they known such to be the

case they could have kept a grip upon their reasoning selves and would have said, "I *feel* as though I had water running down upon the inside of the back of my head," or "I *feel* as though I were being spied upon by the emissaries of an insane hospital" but not "I *have* this or that."

It may be said here that no argument with the patient is so potent as the non-argument or suggestion that no further attempt is made to argue with him. After it has once been explained that his trouble is not a matter of his intelligence or his reasoning self, but of his subconscious self, such explanation serves to reinstate his self-respect and establish a wholesome mental reaction which enables him to look with much more equanimity and tolerance upon the obsessive idea.

It is much more easy to tolerate a few flies if we accept the fact that they are in season, and in case of an obsessive idea a similar point of view, namely: that since the uncomfortable feeling happens to be present it should therefore, for the time being, be taken tolerantly and philosophically. It should be looked upon much as though an imperfectly trained member of an innumerable family of subconscious concepts had lapsed from its good behavior, or as though a child were practicing a naughty prank. The more a child engaged in such naughtiness receives the attention of its elders, the more pronounced becomes the misdemeanor. Equally surely does any obsessive idea which

succeeds in gaining the full and serious attention of its victim immediately assume greater proportions.

Persons suffering from such more or less pronounced lapses of certain subconscious traits, from their good behavior, i.e., from their normal and usual, differ widely in their ability to live at peace with the displacement. Long-persisting disturbances of this sort are at best eventually quite prone to become burdensome, but much depends upon the temperamental equipment. A friend of the writer, a well-known physician, has a phobia of some ten years standing with regard to administering medicine to his wife. Its origin was a serious fright originally received in this connection. Since that event he never is quite able to believe the evidence of his senses in measuring out any medical dose for her, but frequently throws it all away and proceeds again from the beginning to read the label, smell at and examine the contents of the container, and even at times taste the drug—all this in the attempt to enlist the evidence of as many senses as possible. Even after all these precautions and the dose is administered, a sudden fear assails him that perhaps a mistake has been made.

His reassurance always comes after a few moments when he reminds himself that this is his own pet phobia and that it is purely an obsessive phenomenon, an automatic habit of fear justified by just one episode ten years ago and now still repeating itself because for some reason it was not more effectually extinguished at the time. He assures the writer that he

gets only amusement and interest out of it and that he has in regard to it a feeling of the friendliest tolerance.

Certain obsessive ideas, however, seem capable of instantaneous dislodgment if a flaw in the argument can be pointed out by the physician. As remarked elsewhere there is usually a starting point, which gives a certain degree of reason for being. Thus a medical patient had stepped accidentally upon a nail which produced a clean puncture in the sole of the foot. Immediate antiseptic cleansing and dressing were applied. Within forty-eight hours from that time the patient experienced occasional stiff feelings in the lower jaw and a distinct sense of worry and exaggerated self-consciousness. At this juncture an interview with another physician was suggested by the patient's wife. After the wound was inspected and the fact elicited that only forty-eight hours had elapsed since the injury, the entire bubble instantly collapsed when the consultant gravely reminded the patient of a fact he had obviously forgotten, namely, that it usually took at least ten or twelve days for lockjaw to develop! In this case the flaw in the argument was very obvious and the patient, being a medical man, could not help but recognize it. Not so easy, however, is it always to find the error in the argument furnished by the victim of an obsession, for there would appear to be an almost uncanny cleverness in the completeness of the way in which the victim sees to it that there be no least crevice in his armor of logical deduction. A

certain blind fatuity seems to drive the sufferer wherein he obviously and apparently almost wilfully closes his eyes to the oftentimes clearly to be perceived flaw in the assumption of premise. Obviously fear and only fear is at the bottom of all this, since fear is paralyzing and effectually inhibits the usual clearness of perception. Once such process established, the tangent from the straight line entered upon, the road may be endless.

It will not be foreign to the discussion of this point to call attention to what happens to large or small bodies of men when actuated by the unreason of fear. The unthinking and unjustifiable actions of a mob; the rout of an army which is oftentimes only effectually checked by substituting another fear, namely, by firing upon them; the bewilderment of the passenger crossing the street crowded with vehicles; the absurdities practiced by people with regard to the disposition of household effects and perhaps the baby when the house is on fire; and thus down the endless line of human experiences when the usual clear working of the mind is eclipsed.

The nature of this kind of mental disturbance may be elaborately and helpfully explained to the intelligent patient, provided the physician confines himself to the discussion of the principles of psychology involved. But he should steer very clear of more personal applications since, in such event, the conscious or objective self, thoroughly deceived by the subjective, is instantly on its guard and challenges and repels all

direct reflection upon its perspicacity! There are some cases wherein a method of gradual education of the individual may be pursued, treating whatever digestive or other functional disturbances he may have as best one can, and at the same time entering into a simple explanation of what the primary character of an obsession is; showing that it has its roots in so many instances in perversions of the circulatory, the secretory or the eliminatory functions of the body, and that from these sources arise the subsequent imperfectly controlled automatisms of the subconsciousness.

It is to be remembered by the physician, and made clear to the patient, that since he has once been the victim of an obsession he may become so again upon the supervention of similar disturbances at the focal point which gave rise to the first! This need in no sense be a discouragement to him because if he once has learned at what point in his physiology—and here the author wishes to place himself on record as implying, in the large majority of instances of those cases that have come under his own observation, somewhere in the functioning of the abdominal organs—his mental distress has its origin, he will thereafter be much more likely to exercise intelligent care of himself and will come to entertain a merely amused interest or curiosity as to the absurdity of the entire lot of quixotic vagaries that happen to be knocking at his door.

In all people there exist innumerable grooves of habit and of thought. Any habit or thought, if only once carried out, repeats itself the more easily the

second time. The longer the period of time in which such grooves have been used, the deeper they become and the more automatic, and with the greater difficulty effaced. Useful habits of mind and body make no deeper grooves than useless or undesirable ones unless they have been longer established, it being simply a matter of the more frequent repetition as to which assumes the right of way. Curious illustrations of the marvelous tenacity of such established habit-grooves often come to light. A friend of the writer, seventy years of age, after the lapse of fifty years, had returned to his boyhood home upon a Pennsylvania farm. Roaming about the attic chamber of the old house he came upon a saddler's "horse," a contrivance arranged to hold pieces of harness, with a seat and a pedal for the foot, the latter for the purpose of clamping more tightly the leather to be sewed. Seating himself astride the seat, assuming thereby the long forgotten initial act, he found his right leg suddenly make vigorous downward and sidewise movements with the pedal—a movement necessary to clamp that leather tightly, but one he had wholly forgotten and which was awakened out of the memory of fifty years by the suggestion of association, instigated by the first act of the series, sitting astride the "horse"!

Probably only a regard for the more sober conventions of adult life holds most of us back from repeating the childhood formulæ of evidence of good faith, such as "cross my heart," or "hope to die!" Sometimes, however, a wholly new obsessive idea may occur which

appears to have the tenacity of years of possession. In such case we may assume the existence of a soil peculiarly sensitive and receptive, either congenitally so or, as seems more probable, kept so by an existing provoking cause elsewhere than in the mind, never wholly out of commission. Here then we have an occasion for developing in the patient that exercise of the tolerance of his subjective self, which is capable of causing such tendencies to be retired into the remoter regions of his consciousness where, like old furniture in the attic, it does not often appear before his vision and, even then, continues to be looked upon as rejected.

As an illustration of a somewhat different form of obsession the author would mention the case of a young married woman of fine physical development who had always been well up to the time of the present infirmity. She could not sit alone or sleep alone without the immediate presence of an attendant in her chamber. She could not pass through the gate of the grounds of her garden, upon the public highway, even though accompanied by the nurse. With much insistence occasionally her former physician prevailed upon her to accompany him upon a drive in his car, but upon such drives she was always uncomfortable until back in her home and then felt as though she had been through a great strain. She was subject to frequent attacks of what she described as a sort of terror, for which she could recognize no provocation. She complained of only a mild degree of digestive distress.

This lady had become in fact a prisoner within the confines of her home and her degree of helplessness was pathetic. The effect of such disability was heightened by her appearance of perfect physical strength and health. She declared that when she attempted to pass through the gate she was overcome by an overwhelming sense of distress quite incapable of description but which prevented her taking another step forward. Under such circumstances, when attempting to force herself as the result of urging on the part of her companion, her countenance showed noticeable pallor and terror. The patient was entirely open to argument and accepted the explanation that her trouble had its origin somewhere in the digestive tract—which was proven to be the provoking cause—and that the symptoms of fear and convictions of disability were subconscious phenomena out of which she was capable of being trained. She was willing to admit the above premises but the fact remained that she felt herself helpless nevertheless.

The digestive needs were treated in accordance with their indications, vigorous exercise of a character to increase respiration and at the same time to compress the abdominal muscles was ordered, and the patient was given a series of talks explaining that an obsessive idea such as hers, was the result of a fear, transforming itself into a habit conviction. How the fear first came about would have been an interesting excursion into the field of psycho-analysis, but into this we did not go. She was told that, whatever the remote cause

might be which was now manifesting itself as a fear, the fact remained that she was the victim of a habit which, by frequent yieldings, had excavated grooves in the subconsciousness and that for her to fall into that particular groove had become practically an automatism.

Experience has shown that such automatisms of an undesirable character are best treated by the substitution of other and normal habits, and that they cannot be dislodged by merely trying to *drive* them out. In this case, then, there came in the application of the principle mentioned in the training of the puppy. The patient was not argued with but asked to walk as far as she could through the gate and to stand still when the moment came when she could go no farther. After a few moments of such surrender to the fear, the acuteness of the distress would lessen and she was told to then go a few steps farther to some easily remembered landmark such as a tree. Arrived there she was to retrace her steps and consider the first lesson accomplished. Under no circumstances was she to allow the first terror to frighten her back home. This lesson was to be repeated a few days in succession without any further attempt at increasing the distance.

It was interesting to observe that every repetition of the above act became easier. When the patient admitted this, another tree by the roadside was designated as the goal and much the same experience of resistance, offered and overcome, was encountered. After some weeks, not without much protest and

shrinking and supported by continued encouragement, the lady reached some friendly door-steps at a distance of one-eighth of a mile, upon which she would sink with great relief and the consciousness of a mighty work well done. From this time progress became more rapid and in less than two months from the beginning of the training, a half-mile was accomplished, and a little later a pleasure journey of some two thousand miles! The substitution of the normal act, insistently, in the very teeth of the inhibitory fear, conquered by the mere force of its persistent displacement.

It should be noticed that in this case aside from the matters of hygiene, diet and medication, the treatment of the patient was of an educational character purely. The patient was kept in constant touch with the idea that she was engaged in the re-education and training of the subconscious habit that had become engrafted upon her. Picturing to her the animal-like, instinctive nature of the thing she needed to overcome, and bringing to bear merely the same methods one would with a child which needed to be taken out of the wrong way of doing a thing by causing it to do it in the right way, equipped her with a wholly comprehensible concept which she was able to carry out. She was enabled to see the reasonableness of the teaching and thus could lend her own voluntary cooperation.

Parallel cases of types frequently recurring may be appropriately discussed in the above connection. Among these are those of people unable to take a journey or absent themselves from their usual environ-

ment. Others have a fear of places, of crowds, of public gatherings in church or theatre; of music, wind or lightning, of light or heat, of contaminations, some of these latter pathetically strange; in fact of almost everything that may be imagined and often of things which one would think could not be imagined—most of them characterized by distinctive names. The author has had occasion to treat people of both sexes in whom an infinite variety of these distressing things occurred, some of them dating back into the childhood of the patient, often persisting in the same form throughout, but at times shifting to others, more or less undesirable variations of the same fundamental panic theme. The educational method has proven a success in nearly all—always provided that the physical irregularities were kept under continued scrutiny, and that both physician and patient had the courage to persist.

In this connection another instance of a phobia may be mentioned which was brought to the attention of the author some fifteen years ago, which was then new to his experience and has not occurred since. A lady of fine mentality and mature years, upon one pretext or another had for some time evaded carrying out the doctor's instructions, when ordered a full bath. She finally confessed to not being able to suffer herself to become covered by the water in the tub. Each time upon attempting it she had been seized by a terror, so that she no longer dared try the experiment for fear of some possible disaster.

It would be difficult to know, without a prolonged period of questioning and analysis into the past history of the patient, how this fear might have originated, but it was apparent that, from the time of its inception, the patient must have begun to yield to it increasingly, so that eventually the subconsciousness developed a mere dumb automatism which had finally taken the bit entirely in its teeth, producing in its victim a state of complete terrorism. Consequently in any attempt at a bath, it would seem as though the subconsciousness would become enraged at the attempted violence to its "feelings," i.e., to its established grooves of activity, and would vigorously protest in a manner to produce the distressing reactions she experienced. The lady was told to take the bath, though she might expect to meet with a violent protest; but that since she was obviously within her rights in attempting so salutary and reasonable a procedure, the subconsciousness might protest until it got blue in the face!

It was explained that each successive bath, completely carried out, would gradually break the opposition urged by the subconscious automatism, by the simple process of displacement, inasmuch as she was, after all, merely replacing a faulty and irrational habit-groove by one that was reasonable and natural. To the best of the author's recollection no more than four repetitions of the bath, each one completely gone through with, served to lift the ban and the patient was free. This lady was at the same time the victim

of several other phobias, one of them an inability to leave the bed and walk even so short a distance as around the four sides of the room. This latter obsession disappeared in a few days by observing exactly the same methods as those pursued in the case of the bath, the patient making the attempt to stand and walk, reinforced by the moral support furnished by the doctor, each successive attempt becoming easier until the inhibition upon her will suddenly lifted. Co-existing with the above psychic disturbances were pronounced disorders of the digestion, noticeably much gaseous distention of the stomach with duodenal disturbances. The radical improvement of digestion was accompanied by the complete subsidence of the psychic disturbances, but upon the return of symptoms of digestive disorder the spectral crew of phobias would loom upon her horizon. The connection in this case of chronic disorder of digestive functions and the co-existence of obsessive fears was again strikingly obvious.

But it must be fully understood at the beginning that there are many cases wherein the *training* of the *understanding*, in order that it may cooperate, must be insisted upon before the patient can accept the moulding influence of suggestion. An extraordinary degree of helplessness may be present and the re-education must often begin upon lines so simple and comprise a task so light as to cause comment, but the task itself is not the point—obedience to a law is the goal. A famous neurologist, now deceased, made in one case

the task of stringing three large beads a day's work for a lady who was far below the power of using her own cooperation, unaided. When she had arrived at the point where eight beads had been strung per day, her recovery was well under way. The day of small things assumes great proportions to the watchful physician and the greater number of failures arise from the unwillingness of the undeveloped subconscious or instinctive self to accept the needed training.

In reflecting upon the afflicted lives of the victims of such disturbances it would surely appear as though the pendulum of their "variation" had swung far from the mean of the normal—and yet these sufferers are often most generously endowed with superior traits of mind and character—ranking upon the plus side of those desirable equipments. They are by no means abnormal, only varying more readily in their greater susceptibility to certain kinds of psychic disequilibria which should not, and are not, to be considered as serious as they seem, and which in almost all instances are susceptible to readjustment to the degree of restoring and maintaining their happiness and efficiency.

CHAPTER X

THE WAY OUT

It is usually a difficult matter for a person suffering with obsessive fears to win the understanding and helpful cooperation of his family. Since the sufferer rarely comprehends himself, it is naturally impossible to make himself clear to others. The role assumed by the emotional self is an exceedingly variable one in different individuals, and it is safe to say that in the majority of human beings its vast significance as a factor in their distresses is almost wholly overlooked. We need only look to the negro, as he is familiar to us in this country, as an example of a simpler organism than that of our race, for illuminating illustrations. In this race we have a less complex development, a status more like that of the child, a degree of development wherein the emotional nature much more completely dominates the objective or intellectual. The ease with which the more uneducated of the colored people can have illness "conjured" upon them through the hoodoo of some evil-disposed enemy is so well known, that to "be hoodooed" has become a familiar phrase of our language. The only thing that saves us from like susceptibility is the intervention of our su-

perior powers of reasoning—the greater development of the intellectual faculties;—the emotional equipment is equally present within us all, being merely kept more in abeyance by the controlling influence of the mind.

The highest degree of intellectual development is not infrequently accompanied by exceedingly dominating emotional susceptibility, it not being by any means a matter of the degree of intelligence but one of the kind of equipment. Indeed it would appear often as though our various faculties, such as our intellectual, our reasoning powers, our emotions and our “ignorances,” made the journey together upon the same train, each confined within its own locked compartment, with the free intermingling of its passengers as only an occasional occurrence! It would otherwise be difficult to explain why a keen business man permits himself to consult a clairvoyant for the determination of his business policy, or an apparently balanced man or woman should feel easier if he has seen the new moon over the right shoulder instead of the left—or why so many of us permit ourselves, more or less jocularly it is to be hoped, to “rap on wood!!” It may be assumed that intellectual development takes place with us usually in spots. The several areas coalesce more perfectly in some individuals, giving what might be called balance—whilst in others they seem to exist more as islands, separated from each other by a non-conducting medium of more or less insulating power.

To be of real help therefore to our patient, recognizing that we invariably are brought to face problems

of more or less serious involvements between the physical and the psychical, it should be our endeavor to make his position more tolerable and self-respecting, to clear up the understanding of all concerned, the family oftentimes as much as that of the sufferer, that no unjust inference as to the patient's sanity or rational status may be entertained. The sick man has a sufficient burden to bear in his own discomfort and perplexities, and needs all the intelligent sympathy that is his due. It is of great helpfulness to encourage him to unburden himself freely and as often as he feels the desire—more often than he may be inclined indeed. The only person to whom he can do this effectually is naturally the one who first explains him to himself, the physician in fact, but he may not always be at hand and it would be of great help if some member of the family could be so educated as to receive the confidence of the invalid and discuss with him his distresses—with sympathy to be sure, but also with understanding. But the author would draw a sharp line of distinction between the sympathy of understanding and that sort of sympathy, all too prevalent in the atmosphere surrounding many chronic invalids, which merely serves to plunge the patient deeper into the soundless depths of self-consciousness.

All physicians who are concerned with chronic functional disorders meet with instances wherein nothing short of the total elimination of the family of the patient would seem to give him any chance of recovery. Indeed it is no small matter for the immediate

friends or family who constantly surround the patient, to escape being gradually colored by the insistent reiterations of the former's pains, disabilities or feelings. The natural bond of family affection becomes a great menace by virtue of the manner in which we are all drawn too close, in our anxiety and sympathy, to be able rightly to interpret with sufficient perspective. No one recognizes this danger more quickly than the physician when he himself is ill, and none is so ready as he to fall back upon the larger horizon of his brother practitioner, who is unhampered in the calmness of his judgment, by the distorted emotional factor so capable of disqualifying us all.

In the family of the patient we may find one of two attitudes towards his status as an invalid; either an exaggerated or wholly credulous sympathy, which steadily undermines the patient's character and helps him deeper into the indulgence of his symptoms, or an attitude of skepticism and intolerance which causes him to turn into himself and brood over his misfortunes. In each case the patient is misunderstood and in neither is he helped. Numerous cases suggest themselves to the author wherein, from the moment that the patient's real condition—with all of the involvement between his psychical and physical,—was made clear to him and to his intelligent family, and he was made to understand that it was helpful to try to crystallize into thought and words the atmosphere of vague discomfort that surrounded him, relief would be at hand. Under such elucidation the cloud of

physical and mental distress would resolve itself into a few concrete ideas, infinitely easier to bear in their definite form than the murky atmosphere of the mood from which he had emerged.

As an instance illustrating this point the following account will serve: A lady who had suffered from childhood with various manifestations of the "doubting folly" and from hyper-conscientiousness, came under the author's care after she was thirty years of age. She also had occasional visitations of the contamination phobia, wherein she would feel strongly inclined carefully to wipe off the door-knobs before venturing to open doors. The first examination revealed a badly disordered digestion, cold and moist hands and feet, and great indecision of mind as to whether she should place herself under treatment. Before arriving at this final decision she had been several years in making up her mind; indeed she had once travelled three hundred miles of the journey when her courage failed, and she returned home to dwell for another year in her distresses. She was afraid of the doctor, of what he might possibly do to her, of the possibility of disappointment, and was afraid of being afraid.

The character of her mental distresses, which were capable of much variety though a certain few persistent ones had the greater dominance, may best be illustrated by the well-known German fairy tale concerning the maid whom the master sent down the yawning cellar-way to draw a mug of cider, and whose woes are

narrated in the folk-lore of many nations. In no sense does the author mean to treat other than seriously of the unhappiness of such sufferers. This lady had become utterly wretched and unfitted for any relations of wife or mother, all of which suffering being accentuated by her inability to interpret her symptoms to herself or to explain them to her family so that they might intelligently sympathize.

Three months of treatment of the disordered digestion, with active outdoor physical exercise, without any attempt being made to secure the patient's moral cooperation through the re-education of her psychology, produced marked amelioration of all the symptoms. Another three months made the symptoms easily tolerated, and the patient able to enjoy her friends and her interests in a manner she had not been able to at any time within her recollection. At the end of this time a persistent course of psychological instruction was given her and the subconscious, automatic nature of her phobias explained, with endless illustrations. The patient was taught that her fears probably all started from some actual provocative point—some real thing of greater or less importance, of similar nature to those happening to most people many times in their lives. That then, owing to an existing tendency on the part of the subconsciousness, possibly to a greater natural predisposition, or to an acquired one owing to physical provocative causes such as she brought with her in her disordered digestion, the habit to amplify and to doubt took up the

refrain. She would then be helpless in the grasp of what was in reality merely a subconscious automatic process which continued to reverberate through her consciousness and by its persistence succeeded in demanding all of her attention.

This condition was compared, for the purpose of illustration, with a person seated in a room with several undesirable people present who could not be dislodged. The more they were urged to go, the more they were argued with, the tighter they sat, because they then occupied increasingly the centre of the patient's consciousness. The simile was carried further and the patient told that, since she had found that these undesirable people could not be dispossessed, they were to be therefore left undisturbed and her attention was to become engaged, as far as lay in her power, with some desirable person whom she was to invite into the room and with whom she was to absorb herself as completely as possible. So long as thus engaged with the centre of the consciousness, the objectionable people would at once appear more dimly to her perceptions—they could only occupy the margin of the consciousness and at times would become wholly forgotten. The undesirable people were equivalent to the obsessive thoughts, fears and doubts which had automatically thrust themselves before her consciousness, and the desirable person the same as some earnest interest or occupation which by its dominant presence in the foreground of her attention, of necessity must displace the unbidden worries.

If once a patient can be made to realize the great significance of this simple truth, and induced to practice the principle, no matter how imperfectly, the beginning of the end of his troubles will be at hand. It is of the greatest importance *patiently* to teach this principle because to the mind obsessed by fear-thoughts and intensely absorbed with them, the obscuration of the outlook upon normal things is complete. The patient is completely shut out from the world of the normal, from the brightness of the sunshine, by colored glasses; and he cannot get away from this absorbing consciousness even sufficiently to give ordinary attention to what is said to him. Such patients often have the appearance of being always preoccupied. Whether witnessing a play or seated amongst others at a table, their attention is wholly or partly elsewhere. They cannot detach their consciousness from themselves.

This lady, as above mentioned, was treated at first emphatically for her obvious attendant digestive and emotional unbalance, to which end our pharmacopeia is abundantly equipped—if the modern therapeutic iconoclasm does not get in the physician's way! She was always given opportunity to unburden herself and listened to with respectful interest, even though one could foretell that the burden of her distress would be ever the same. After such narration was over she would be told, "Yes, but you know that I have explained to you that these troublesome things are mere automatic thought-habits which repeat themselves because they have become involuntary. You have but

to recognize this fact each time anew and eventually you will succeed in detaching your real self from them, more and more successfully."

The patient was told that she would thus be able, by actually saying to herself: "This is but an automatic thought-habit, I will take up some more agreeable thought or occupation and thus crowd the other farther out of the way," to establish new and more desirable ones. She became enabled, with increasing ease, to detach herself from the objectionable and to hold more fast to the desirable. A little success gave her courage to do more and thus she grew in the power to become less dismayed when the undesirable things knocked at the door of her consciousness. To these she would say, in her thought, "Yes, I know what you are, you can sit there 'till the crack of doom if you wish, but I am otherwise engaged!" After this simple process had been carried on for some months she finally expressed herself as feeling for the first time she could remember, "out of prison." For another year there would still come occasional visitations of the old thought-habits, fainter by far, and only at intervals, but at the end of that time she declared herself as well as she could wish to be.

Thus was wrought the emancipation of a human soul from the tyranny of twenty-five years of a mind-habit. The mental distresses experienced by this lady originated in causes that reached back, doubtless, to the years of her childhood and could these have been definitely determined they would have appeared tri-

fling at the most. It does not require that any serious frights or shocks should have been experienced by the patient obsessed with phobias. It is true that such do occasionally appear to mark their starting point, but in far the larger number of instances their origin lies in trifles which would almost appear to serve merely as an excuse for the subconscious wheels to take up a harmony of discord. The real reason why such inharmonious and incoordinated processes ever succeeded in foisting themselves upon the subconscious mechanism of the victim lies, in the judgment and experience of the writer, in that peculiarly vulnerable and susceptible status of the individual induced by fluctuations from the normal physiology of those organs, and that vast interlocking network of nerve ganglia, which reside in the region commonly called the abdominal, but which many a sufferer might justly designate as the "abominable!"

But given a susceptible soil, perverse automatisms may arise as uncannily, to the mind of the sufferer, as were the supposed phenomena of spontaneous generation sixty years ago. Any of the multitudinous imprints existing upon the subjective may assume virility and merely through repetition make ever-deepening grooves upon the subconscious automatic mechanism. Like wrong fingering at the piano, the early misspelling and mispronouncing of a word, the playful imitation of a stammerer, or any other undesirable habit persisted in for even a short time during the early formative years—the grooves thus made cannot

be eliminated in any other way than by the deliberate excavation of new ones. But in such process of correction the undesirable automatic habits should be left severely alone. They should not be argued with, they cannot be forcibly thrust out, they must not by such methods be kept in the centre of the consciousness—since these but give them greater recognition and serve to deepen and keep them alive.

The "Chrisian Science" people carry out this principle admirably in their practice when they "deny evil." They contemplate and affirm the "good," the desirable or ideal; they have a working use of the principle of substitution; thus if it does not happen to be pneumonia or typhoid or some other concrete and specific entity which they are refuting, but some psychic disequilibrium, they often do literally replace the undesirable by that which is desirable.

In the treatment of the innumerable cases of long standing which present endless variations upon the above citation, one cannot but experience great regret that such patients could not have had the benefit of a more intelligent direction while young. It is the writer's opinion that such tendencies are easily recognizable in the child, that they can then be much more readily corrected and better ones substituted, and that in this direction lies one of the most fruitful and fascinating fields of the preventive medicine of the future.

The child is, what it will always continue to be, a child; when it is older it has become merely an adult child, it does not change in the least in its potentials.

If we believe in the necessity and possibility of training the child, as all parents believe and practice more or less perfectly and more or less consciously, we need in no sense despair should the child have reached the age of fifty and still be in need! The possibilities of such training are equally existent; we can still, metaphorically, take our hands and remodel the rugosities and excoriations of the fifty or sixty-year-old automatic self into a new topography which, when put upon the turn-table of the phonograph of our daily life, will prove to be a "record" yielding more pleasing harmonies and conforming more nearly to the inborn destiny of our inheritance,—namely, the *right to vary*, in such direction as may be for our *best!*

CHAPTER XI

SETTING THE STAGE

Though the prevalence of obsessive ideas in the young is exceedingly common, their presence is often recognized by the parent only when they have become pronounced by their unusual manifestations. Even the parent is apt to look upon such irregularities as transient vagaries out of which the child is expected to grow. Yet it is in these incipient stages of their development that the peculiarities of a child can be most effectively pruned, and the right direction given to an impetus which appears to be departing at a tangent from the normal. The author recalls the case of a boy who was devoted to playing the childish game of "tag," touching with his hand every hitching post upon his way to school. This habit soon became involuntary and his progress along the street was regularly broken by the necessity of touching every post and even retracing his steps if one had been overlooked. A little later in his career he formed the habit of whistling when drawing on his stockings and soon discovered that he could not draw them on unless he did whistle! Whilst attending boarding school it was observed that in ascending a staircase he always talked

to himself and inquiry revealed the fact that in his opinion he could not mount the steps without saying, before taking each step and each time in a louder voice, "Now I'm going up, now I'm going up," the pitch of his voice keeping pace with the height of the stairs! It was also discovered that he felt himself obliged to count a certain number of counts between each letter in the spelling and reading of a sign because, he explained, "I should die if I didn't!"

Here was an instance of a child abnormally susceptible to suggestion, and doubtless of a congenital equipment which made it an easy prey to every ill wind that blew. His ordinary waking state was almost as open to the moulding force of any modifying impression as though he were plunged into the deepest hypnotic trance and in a state of pure subjectivity, with the correcting influence of the conscious and reasoning self in almost complete abeyance. Nevertheless this boy proved to be equally susceptible to correction. He was referred to a skilled colleague in his own home town who gave him positive suggestions in the hypnotic state wherein the greatest emphasis was placed upon his future ability to do only normal, natural, and usual things and *never again* erratic and grotesque things such as above cited, or any others of like kind. His nutrition was improved through attention to his digestion, he was given an active outdoor life, and in six months after the writer first saw him the boy appeared to have undergone a change almost as radical as though he had assumed another person-

ality, with the complete disappearance of all crippling and freakish obsessive habits.

One of the most classic of the author's cases as illustrating the ease with which the modifying wedge of suggestion may be inserted into the subconsciousness of a child, and a normal habit be caused to displace an abnormal one, was that of a lovable little boy of five years of age. He had acquired the habit of consuming from three to four hours in the eating of each of his simple meals, so that he had hardly concluded one before the following one was at hand. The situation had become desperate since it consumed nearly all of the child's time and that of the nurse and the little body had become exceedingly under-nourished. The little boy's explanation was that he *couldn't* eat any faster. He would take a spoonful of porridge, turn it over in the mouth once or twice, making no attempt to swallow, and then cease all further attempts at mastication. When told to chew his food and then to swallow it, he would make a few attempts at turning it over and then desist. This habit had been upon him for some months and was increasing in intensity and there was also a nocturnal incontinence to the extent of as many as twenty-four times in some nights. No history was obtainable save one of a prolonged period of indigestion.

Since it was obvious that the pressing need in this child's case was the improvement of his nutrition, and this latter was not possible so long as his obsession regarding the chewing and swallowing of his food stood

in the way, this perverted function was attacked through the channel of hypnotic suggestion. After repeated failures to make any impression upon him this method was abandoned and attempts were made to give him suggestion whilst asleep, but again with negative results. Thereupon all further attempts to enter his subconsciousness through the portals of the hypnotic state were relinquished and the problem was considered from the standpoint of indirect suggestion in the waking state, with results that were exceedingly satisfactory and phenomenally prompt.

The nurse, an intelligent woman of rare skill and perception and peculiarly well adapted for this work, was first privately instructed that when the doctor called, all of his remarks were to be addressed to her and that she was told to hold herself in the attitude of a perfectly passive but deeply interested listener. She was to assent, with much earnestness, to the doctor's statements but was to make no comment upon them afterward to the child, but was to act as though everything he had said was for her ears alone. The little patient was of course to be present at all such interviews but no attention was to be directed to him by either doctor or nurse, in fact his presence was to be quite ignored and all conversation was to go over his head. The stage having been thus arranged, and with his back to the patient, the doctor assured the nurse that he was perfectly convinced that the little boy had thus far really not been able to eat his food in less time than he had been consuming. That he believed he had

tried his best but had not been able to accomplish it and that he had no fault to find whatever with his earnest attempts to eat his food properly. But after carefully examining him he had come to the conclusion that the trouble was one that could be helped and he now wished the nurse to write the patient's father (of whom he was passionately fond) assuring him that he need no longer worry and feel unhappy about his child, since henceforth he would be able to eat every one of his meals on time! That hereafter he would even be able to eat them in half an hour, or in just the same time as the rest of the family, and that hereafter there would be no more wetting of the bed at night!

All this having been delivered to the nurse, over the child's head, with much impressiveness, the doctor proceeded to leave the room. But, as a seeming afterthought, he stopped to whisper to the little boy before going out. He explained to him in substance just what he had told the nurse, reiterating carefully all of the salient points of his discourse, namely, that he knew that he had not been able to do any better in the past, but that hereafter he would be able to eat his meals on time and that he would no longer be distressed by wetting the bed in his sleep. He then made his departure with a manner of having decisively settled a very important matter.

The following day the doctor called in a mental state of much expectancy, feeling that he had now got all of his eggs in one basket and that these needed careful watching. The little patient had been brought

into the room; the doctor addressed himself to the nurse, and the latter reported that thus far he had not been able to do any better with regard to his manner of eating, but that during the preceding night there had been absolutely no sign of incontinence! At this report much gratification was expressed by the doctor and the same procedure was gone through with as upon the day before, i.e., emphatic statements and explanations to the nurse and the seeming afterthought of confidential explanation to the little boy. The next day the nurse reported that the breakfast had been eaten *promptly on time*, but that the other meals had still lagged somewhat! But by the end of a week all meals were being eaten promptly and there had never been any return of the nocturnal incontinence. The little patient rapidly became better nourished and up to the moment of the present writing, which is ten years later, there has never been a reminder of the distressing obsession.

In this most interesting case, wherein an obsessive automatism seemed to be anchored so firmly as actually to threaten the child's health through the embargo upon its nutrition, the psychological disturbance was again the outcome of certain disturbances that were primarily of the digestion. It had taken such form, however, as to necessitate therapeutic measures through the channel of the subconscious, the reflex that was dominating the will and mentality being of such nature as to prove obstructive, and it was necessary to deal with the end product as manifested in the

phobia, rather than with the first cause, the digestion. In this instance peculiarly, though also true of many others occurring among both children and adults, the singularly penetrating value of indirect suggestion was admirably shown. Direct statements, such as made to the nurse, if made to the child would have been completely rejected by the consciousness, because the latter would then have been directly concentrated upon them and in all such cases suggestion is no longer suggestion. But when made to the third person, the nurse in this case, the child's attention was not directly challenged and the statements, which were suggestions, fell upon the marginal consciousness of the listener and found easy access into his subconsciousness whereupon they were as easily carried out.

In another instance occurring in a little girl of ten there was a rather remarkable illustration of a not unusual state of affairs that may be produced in perfectly well-regulated families. The child had developed a complete inability to eat anything save two slices of bread and butter at each meal. She was even inclined to hesitate at the butter, using but a small quantity. A general malnutrition was obvious, the little ears were translucent, the conjunctivae bluish and she was too languid to manifest any interest in play. Inquiry showed that, the girl being slight and delicate, owing to an already existing malnutrition, the mother had, not unnaturally, fallen in with the idea that a delicate child could not and should not eat very much. To this suggestive attitude on the part of its

natural mentor the child fell an easy prey and at the time the patient came under observation, there had become developed a beautifully typical case of obsession with regard to her inability to partake of but the smallest quantities of food.

She was a sweet and affectionate girl, with a good intelligence, and could be talked with much as though she were upon one's own plane of maturity. She met the doctor with absolute trust and an actually pathetic belief in his wisdom and the wonders he might be able to perform. To the end in view the aunt of the child who was present, and the nurse, had been previously instructed. They had been told to give her to understand in various ways, both by direct talk and by other more mysterious and subtle allusions to the doctor's power in the direction of making little girls get well, how much they were expecting and how much she might expect. The field of suggestible expectancy had been thoroughly prepared. The patient's mind, i.e., the subconscious part of it, had been put into the condition of a sensitive photographic plate and was ready for, and highly expectant of, the restoration of the ability to eat and the consequent strength to follow.

The author was consciously anticipating a rare experience, since never had he found conditions so favorable and rightly attuned for the principle of suggestion, purely by indirect means, through the channels of confidential talks to the child, and also *at* the child, by directing his remarks to the nurse in the former's

presence. The patient was first told in the presence of the aunt and the nurse that the doctor was quite satisfied, upon examination, that she really was in a condition wherein she obviously could not eat any more than she did. That he believed that her own conviction as to her utter inability to take one spoonful of milk was doubtless correct. That the exceeding tiredness of which she complained was, of course, due to her inability to take more food, but that it was unfortunately true that such inability existed. This talk, and all others, were always conducted with the utmost gravity and earnestness and great care was taken that the child should never in the slightest degree be shaken in her own self-respect. Had she been told that she was quite wrong in her interpretations of herself, or foolish, or that she really could eat a reasonable amount of food but merely imagined that she could not, the entire combination of carefully thought out and arranged psychological paraphernalia, directed toward promoting the receptivity of her subconscious mind, would have tumbled over like a structure of cards.

The result of this carefully prepared approach to the stronghold wherein were lodged the obstructive concepts, the obsessive convictions as to the inability to eat, was a condition of expectancy; in other words a readiness to be convinced to the contrary, to be helped against her inability to help herself. It will be seen that here we had the same condition that prevails with the devotee approaching the shrine of

miraculous relics, who has undergone such preparation of expectancy as to be easily receptive to the auto-suggestion of the cure of his ailments, and who is capable of becoming thus cured,—*providing his condition be of such nature* as to be susceptible of such methods!

The various stages of preparation having been thus gone through with—and herein lay the major part of the treatment—the child was given her first talk with regard to the possibility of taking more food, the nurse always being present. Both child and nurse were addressed alternately, with the same earnestness and as though they were of the same age. She was gravely assured that this day she would, for the first time in some years, be able to take one-half glass of milk at luncheon. That under no circumstances would she be able to take more, even though she tried, and she would only be permitted to take it at one meal, her luncheon. That after two days the nurse would be allowed to increase the amount of milk to three-fourths of a glass, but it would be absolutely confined to that one meal. A few days later a second half-glass was allowed at a second meal and after another short interval a third.

Thus was begun the simple process of steady increase, carefully graduated to appeal to the child's own sense of proportion and the fitness of things. In due time plenty of butter and beefsteak began to appear upon her menu and in a month the little girl's consumption of food rivalled that of the average adult with a healthy appetite. In the course of time it be-

came necessary to instruct the little patient that she was taking about as much food as most children of her age consumed, and that hereafter she was to give the matter no further thought. Owing to the extreme suggestibility of the child her pendulum of psychic equilibrium was capable of swinging too far the other way and a reasonable limit had to be established as to the average amount of food to be consumed. With the continuation of better digestion and nutrition the psychic stability became established.

In an analysis of this little girl's condition it became apparent that one had to deal with an extremely sensitive organism. The equilibrium between the physical and psychical was congenitally delicately adjusted and possibly might always continue to be so. But it is not the author's belief that mere delicacy of body is any criterion of the existence of a vulnerable psychic poise. Strong and rugged people would appear to be quite as frequently victims of such disturbances and when they do appear the very robustness of the individual heightens the contrast. In the eyes of both patient and friends such accentuated contrasts are the more noticeable and the bewilderment of the patient the greater. It would appear that this vulnerable factor in at least many individuals is dependent upon provocative causes of a physical nature and that we have to search here for their elucidation and relief.

The author is of the opinion that most persons can be upset and disastrously acted upon by subconscious manifestations. He has seen it occur in men who up to

sixty and seventy years of age had never been ill, had always continued active in their vocations, and then suddenly become victims of strange fears, obsessions and phobias, so that we may safely assume that somewhere in the functioning mechanism, other than in the ultimate expression of subconscious phenomena, the discord had been made possible. Nor is he of the opinion that we need to search the remote recesses of the subconsciousness for memories of startling episodes, oftentimes of a suspected sexual origin, for the explanation of obsessive conditions which in most cases yield to methods that make no attempt to trace their origin to such sources.

It is true that various forms of self-abuse happen in very young children, in some cases of no more than three or four years of age, but these morbid manifestations are reflexes of disturbances that are primary elsewhere. Such occurrences, even after they are obliterated, may make indelible memories upon the subconscious storehouse and be capable of being awakened and associated subsequently with kindred or unlike impressions, forming complexes wherein he who seeks only the sexual factor will assuredly find it. The existence of psychological aberrations, or at least the potentials for their future development, are recognizable many times in children so young that it is inconceivable that any kind of sexual consciousness could have made itself manifest; and in cases wherein sexual roots do reveal themselves as the causative factor for subsequent psychic disequilibria, it may safely be

argued that it is likely to be, after all, the presence of the unstable basic balance, which responds with a readiness that is almost pathological to any upsetting cause that may happen along. It does not appear that an equally single-minded search has as yet been made for special factors other than the sexual one, and the entire field of psychic research appears infinitely too vast to permit of conclusive deductions of a single factor type.

The writer has in mind two children, brothers, whom he has known since infancy and who are now in their thirties, who when less than a year old showed the probability of a future deficient psychic balance. As they developed, various little queernesses became patent, the older particularly developing such peculiarities as made him easily the butt and the victim of various persecutions from the other boys at school. He became the prey, in rapid succession, of one fad after another, whilst in preparatory school and college always going to the utmost extreme, and though now a mature man he is not wholly able entirely to extricate himself from the handicap of his naturally unstable equipment. The younger brother seemed better balanced in youth, but is likewise given to being carried away into courses of conduct that are largely governed merely by feeling,—the objective reasoning consciousness being so easily eclipsed as to occupy second place even in matters of vital importance.

An analysis of these two cases seems to show an unusual susceptibility towards reasoning deductively

from false premises, such premises being accepted by the subconsciousness before the objective mind had had time properly to consider and pass upon them. A certain kind of what appeared to be intellectual ability was present in both individuals, making possible high marks at school, but this consisted chiefly of the power of memorizing,—a subconscious attribute, and was not a property of the objective or reasoning self. That certain sexual aberrations should manifest themselves in the above instances was natural, but it was no more significant than that many other manifestations of a psychopathic nature should have been present; it was the equipmental groundwork that was at fault.*

* A tragic dénouement to this citation of an instance of exaggerated suggestibility, wherein the control of the reasoning self was in abeyance, is furnished in the subsequent career of these two individuals.

Falling victim to a prevailing epidemic and having at an earlier period become zealous converts to one of the cults of the times, they refused the aid of all medical skill,—theirs proving the only two fatalities out of an approximate one hundred members of their community who fell ill at the time,—and recovered.

CHAPTER XII

CRUTCHES FOR THE LAME

Everybody is familiar with the character of fiction wherein the long-suffering invalid is portrayed lying in bed, turning her emaciated countenance longingly to the light, which is charily filtered through the tightly closed windows. By the bedside are medicine bottles in formidable array and curtains protect the bed from all possible danger of draughts. Surrounding the patient are sympathetic friends with proper sick-room countenances and all the paraphernalia are at hand for the indefinite continuance of the desperate state of the patient. Into this mausoleum for the living is then pictured the entrance of the ruddy-faced doctor, who, with one comprehensive glance takes in the entire situation and presumably diagnoses the patient's condition at the same time. He strides up to the bed and pulls aside the curtains, with another step he is at the window which he throws open wide, and then the entire collection of bottles and pills is lustily ejected, whilst a merry breeze causes the solid phalanx of microbes lurking within the hangings to disperse; the graphically pictured horror of the patient and family

completes the picture and the patient, despite such terrifying innovations, gets well!

Neither is this picture out of an old-time story book in the least overdrawn, for just such happenings occur in the present-day experience of many physicians. There are numberless patients today suffering from the lack of the like common-sense interpretations of their condition, and the physician does not in each case happen to be like the one in the story book. We have all seen, particularly with patients in easy circumstances, that the time-worn phrase of "enjoying poor health" may be a literal verity. Here we may find the daintiest appointments for the enjoyment of invalidism; a complete wardrobe of charming negligées and "fetching" boudoir caps meets the physician and caller in bewildering succession. There is often a special time set apart for the reception of callers and various domestic functions are arranged with sole reference to their taking place in the invalid's chamber. The writer has known more than one feminine patient express keen disappointment when the assured well-being dawning upon the near horizon threatened the disqualification of a recently acquired and extensive sick-room wardrobe!

Would we do away then with all the things that tend to make the invalid's sufferings more tolerable? Shall she not be surrounded by comforts and friends, with willing hands to anticipate her needs, real or superfluous, and shall not all noises be hushed and all of the necessities of thinking or caring for herself be

removed before they can occur? By no means would we withhold all this solicitude and loving care if, in so doing, we are really bringing aid and alleviation, and there is no danger of making the patient a pervert from the normal desire to become well, and from the ability to resume her proper place in the ranks of the efficient. There are conditions of invalidism wherein the patient can not be injured, even by an excess of attention, and in such cases the anxious solicitude of the loving family has a right to lavish itself to the utmost satisfaction of its own heart-longing; but these are much more likely to be instances of acute or fatal illness. Should the illness prove to be a chronic one, however, from which it is expected that the patient will recover wholly or in part, and resume, more or less completely, her rightful role of efficiency and happiness, we are confronted with the great responsibility of seeing to it that there is not engendered such undermining of the invalid's moral tone and weakening of her normal powers of tolerance and endurance, as forever after to unfit her for contact with ordinary living conditions.

Environmental conditions are of enormous influence upon the patient, for or against his convalescence. But we are obliged to consider not alone the problem of his convalescence but that of the sort of a man, woman or child we shall find after such convalescence from the immediate illness has been attained. The after-effects of chronic illness may easily be worse though of a different character than the original illness and more difficult to deal with, since there are likely to be con-

fusional complexes of a lamed moral resiliency interwoven with the subconscious memories of actual invalidism. Here comes in a very legitimate and urgent need to be supplied to the convalescent; the re-education of his moral tone and of his healthful outlook upon life; the dispersion of the fogs and memories of the invalidism of the past by the vigorous substitution of suggestions of courage, of efficiency, of the ambition to take up anew all of the dropped threads of the fabric of life which the patient must and can learn to weave even more skillfully than ever before. A person who has been ill and discouraged for long periods of time has become lamed in the very citadel from which power springs—in his soul, and he can not be turned out to pasture as we would a horse, in the expectation that the young grass and the springing turf will restore health to that non-corporeal part of him which responds to renewal only when it is touched by another vital spark that is akin to itself!

To no less degree than that environment and re-education are of such paramount importance in the complete and wholesome recovery from invalidism, so equally are environmental conditions subtle but powerful factors in the production of the same. One may be conscious of their influences and yet not be able to alter them, but more often we are the unthinking and therefore helpless victims of conditions wherein environment is only in part to blame and our own lack of understanding of what is happening to ourselves, responsible for the rest.

Some years ago the author was consulted by a gentleman of middle age who came into his consulting-room with a manner of great dejection. His look was downcast, his voice low and apologetic, and he walked upon the toes of his boots as though desiring to make as little noise as possible. His story was to the effect that he was suffering much unhappiness and depression, and that life seemed long since to have lost its coloring. He was married and had children and his wife was affectionate and companionable, and there was nothing in his affairs to cause him undue financial anxiety. Neither was he suffering from any recognizable physical distress. The very noticeable things about him were his manner and appearance of utter woe, and the almost whispering voice. It was only when, during the course of the examination, the question was asked as to the nature of his occupation, did light break upon the situation; for his answer was, that he was the librarian of a great university. Here at last was sufficient reason for the possibility of the most subtle form of poisoning, for it was shown that for twenty-five years the gentleman had walked upon tiptoe, had spoken in low tones, and had at first consciously and then soon unconsciously practiced the complete obliteration of himself!

To this man was explained that he was obviously suffering from the effects of his life-long environmental suppression and that his help must come through the reopening of the old channels of natural expression. He was told that every emotion we experience must

first be preceded by a "set" of the corresponding muscles which then was followed by its proper emotion. That the emotion was never primary but always secondary. That it would be impossible for any one to place himself in front of a mirror and whilst drawing the muscles of the face broadwise, making grimaces at himself, experience at the same moment the emotion of weeping. Such a sequence of emotion would be an impossibility. Neither would he be able, while drawing a long and downcast face, to experience any other emotion but one of sorrow and woe.

To him was explained the psychological principle that human emotions are not primary things but that they are end-products, ever secondary to some preceding muscular setting, and that the latter is secondary to the primary concept or thought. In most instances it is absolutely within one's own power to determine what emotion one would experience, this fact being capable of abundant illustration. It is impossible for a group of boys, desirous of fighting with the new boy who has moved into the neighborhood, to fight with him at once, merely to show their own supremacy. They must first need to work themselves into the fighting mood. To do this they begin to ball their fists and to make motions with their arms as though they were about to deliver a blow. The muscles of their faces begin to be set in lines of anger. They scowl and sputter and revolve around their victim until, presently they are properly worked up to fight, the psychological moment being reached. The boy who whistles because

it is dark goes through the same entire physiological and psychological sequence, even though he has done it all subconsciously, without in the least knowing that he is not afraid merely *because* he is making a cheerful noise!

If we observe the happy person and then the unhappy one, what is the first thing that attracts our attention? It is, of course, from his countenance that we gather how he feels; we need not ask him about himself because we see it so obviously in the set, the expression of the muscles of his face. To the natural criticism that such person may not have deliberately chosen to set his countenance in the lines which we observe, and that his emotion of sadness or joy would appear to have come of itself, the answer would be that thought must have been the first incentive. The nature of the thought determined the immediate following of the set of the facial muscles, and only after this had taken place was it possible for the emotion or "feeling" to supervene.

If we look upon the countenance of a group of fellow mourners at the bier of a departed loved one, or upon those who assemble upon an occasion of rejoicing and merry-making, we plainly see how wholly at one are thought and appearance and feeling and how impossible it would be to experience an emotion that would be opposed to the expression of our countenance and to the sad or happy thought that had created the initiative. But the patient under discussion had not reflected upon these things, they were too close to him,

he was under them. It is a rather startling revelation to any man who has pointed out to him that he has become the victim of his environment in the absence of any noticeable physical irregularities or distresses. We usually see the approach of the obvious attacks upon our peace of body or mind but in this instance nothing could have been more subtle, since the aggressing agent was the sum of all the environmental conditions surrounding him.

Being a man of superior intelligence, the patient listened attentively to the elucidation of the above principles and at once proceeded to carry them out. He practiced a definite length of time each day in the attempts to dislodge the almost crystallized setting of the facial muscles. The best results were obtained by standing before a mirror and making grimaces at himself, whereupon he soon declared that it was obvious that the corresponding emotion followed immediately. This discovery being thus brought to him through his own experimentation, he developed courage to try further. He was told to go out into the woods and fields and practice making a loud noise, such as his college yell, which might be further accentuated by throwing up his hat! Here again a signal triumph and demonstration of a principle were obtained. Eventually the friendly cooperation of several bright young ladies, who sat at the same table, was obtained, to try not only to make him laugh at their own nonsense but to induce him to perpetrate jokes of his own. All these devices were perfectly successful and of the

greatest interest to the patient. The principles having been thus clearly demonstrated and their application begun upon, he returned to his home and later humorously wrote that upon his return his wife hardly knew, in the changed man, the husband who had left her a short time before!

If any reader should doubt the tremendous influence of environment upon all natures sooner or later, let him attempt to care for a person who is ill in whom his affections or interests are sincerely enlisted. Let this patient be particularly sensitive to light and noises and sudden movements in the sick chamber, so that the attendant is under the necessity of constant noiselessness of movement and delicacy of touch around the bed and person of the patient. If, further, his own bed or room should adjoin that of the patient, so that the need of refraining from even the most ordinary noises in moving about therein should be continued,—it would not be long before such attendant found himself under a considerable nervous tension. He might find himself burning with the desire to throw his boots upon the floor with exaggerated force and, needlessly, and quite contrary to his usual custom, desire to slam a door! For such attendant to change into a room remote from his patient where he might for a time indulge in all the ordinary noises of dressing and undressing with a somewhat exaggerated freedom of movement, would be a sane and justifiable method of restoring his equilibrium and continuing his usefulness to the patient.

We do not arrive at the recognition of truths so much as the result of abstract reasoning as by the intelligent perception and interpretation of the common happenings and experiences of our everyday life. Almost every mother has learned that if her child cries as the result of some mishap it may be possible to divert its attention from the possessing grief by the instant substitution of a joy. It is only in a vague manner that the mother is aware that she is carrying out a great psychological principle. Were she to reflect upon what far-reaching application this principle was susceptible, in the character-training of her child, she would be enabled to spare it most of the unhappiness of its future years. The writer wishes to pay tribute to the thoughtfulness of a father who had been his patient, who had taught his little girls always to say, with the utmost promptness, when they fell down, "On we dash!" The clever substitution of a brave adventurous idea, before the mishap of a fall had opportunity to produce a corresponding emotion of grief, was as effective as it was happy.

In the nursery of today we find practices in vogue that go far back into time wherein the nurse, by manner and tone of voice, plays upon and arouses the entire scale of emotions of which the child is capable. The ghost-story, related in the darkened room, with only the light of the fire upon the hearth to show the whites of the eyes of the inspired narrator, together with the solemn countenance and bugaboo voice, quickly creates the same set of countenance and appre-

hensive attitude of body in the child, whereupon all the *feelings* of shiver and creeps and horror are at hand. A state of emotion may be thus early produced to send the child to bed in terror of the dark and of every sound it hears; and in such manner the tyranny of the *habit of fear* may be born, to take in future years all manner of shapes. The significance of the attitude of body as an index of the emotion that is to follow is everywhere recognized. The grotesque goose-step of the German army is a deliberately thought-out method of exhilarating the spirits or suggesting dash to the soldier. No one can hear martial music without experiencing a quickened breath, a step that keeps time to the tempo, and a glow of patriotic fervor at the sight of the colors, the uniforms and all the bravery of military accoutrements. Forlorn hopes dash on to their death in glory to the inspiration of their own cheering, and doomed passengers on sinking ships are sustained to the end by the uplifting strains of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," produced even by those of their own number!

A panic among a flock of sheep, or among a body of men, may be created by one individual; and lately we have an instance of a soldier who, seized by fear and thus running away was supposed by his comrades to be leading a charge, upon which impression they followed him—achieving a victory over the enemy by reason of their dash and valor! The history of nations, as of individuals, is made up of countless illustrations wherein the attitude of the body determined the atti-

tude of the spirit, and there would be written today far less history of disease did we better understand the wide-reaching significance of what may be done for both body and spirit by a more enlightened approach to the duplex problem through the channels of a more perceptive intelligence. Always does the too complete absorption of the patient or physician in the mere material manifestations of disorder—in the bald symptoms of pain and mental distress—tend to draw us away from the perception of the larger horizon, and the *Art* of Medicine, the no less noble twin-sister of the Science of Medicine, fails of her just recognition.

CHAPTER XIII

PUT YOURSELF IN HIS PLACE

Assuming the existence of a large number of individuals whose normal deviates considerably from the usual, the urgent problem is before us as to what is to be done for these Variants that they may be reasonably comfortable, that they may fulfill their responsibilities, and that they may be saved from lapsing into a sort of despairing semi-invalidism. This latter deplorable end is all too frequent, towards the relief of which the prevalent apathy and lack of comprehension often existing among medical men is a humiliation and reproach.

Individuals of this class usually live as long as their more robust friends, they accomplish as much work though often under more difficult and distressing conditions, and they often unquestionably develop more of the higher qualities of character and the Christian graces in consequence of the more trying nature of the demand upon them. But they too rarely do this with the aid of the doctor to whom they are justified in looking for relief; more often it is despite the physician from whom they may get medicine or surgery, or at times the dictum that

since he can find neither fever nor tumor nor broken bones there can be nothing the matter. At the same time their very soul may be crying out for some sort of perceptive recognition of the fact that they are really suffering and in need of having such suffering interpreted along the lines that will appeal alike to their understanding and the needs of their higher spiritual nature.

The simplest principles of human psychology teach us of the disastrous effects of pain and the imperative need of enabling the consciousness to forget it, so that its cumulative effect may not act as an upsetting factor to other functions, near or remote. The conception that pain is nature's way of remonstrating and of calling attention of both the lower and higher nerve centres to the existence of trouble is true and helpful—as far as it goes. It is in no sense helpful, however, unless we carry the thought to its logical conclusion which is that pain, much or little, of long or short duration, is a disassociating force of greatest potency.

Pain may interfere with or quite inhibit function not only locally and directly, but also indirectly or reflexly, often of the entire organism. The acute reactions following acute pain, with the attending reflexes, are familiar enough. The subtler reactions which follow chronic discomfort, and their undermining effects upon the psychology of the individual, are but vaguely recognized. Yet their devitalizing effects produced upon the minds of countless suf-

ferers, constitute probably the bulk of the causes that contribute to human inefficiency among the class of the chronic semi-invalids. Whatever wears upon or depletes a person, be it pain, anxiety or unhappiness, is a drain of *unknown* degree and one needing to be reckoned with unceasingly.

It may be conceded that could pain, together with whatever disturbances it engenders, be confined wholly to the domain of the subconscious, the remedial processes would then take place in the shortest possible period of time. If we look abroad in the animal world we see that the domestic dog or cat when ill, will betake itself to its lair and fall into a state of sleep or torpor which is simply an act of complete submergence into the subconscious,—an instinctive impulse or provision wherein the least possible obstruction to the most perfect physiological readjusting and reconstructive processes prevail. "Sleep, nature's sweet restorer," is with man the nearest approach to the subconscious, the state farthest removed from the inevitable disturbing effects of the consciousness upon the peace of the body. Indeed individuals are not rare, who, when suffering pain or indisposition, betake themselves instinctively to prolonged hours of sleep, thereby hastening their convalescence. It may even be allowed, in the sleepy or semi-delirious conditions attending certain acute illnesses, such as in the fevers, that the dulling of the consciousness *may be an instinctive provision* which permits the more prompt readjusting of the physio-

logical balance. The "turning point" of an illness, a matter of common folk-lore, and popular in fiction as being indicated by a prolonged sleep, is none the less a verifiable clinical phenomenon.

To *alleviate* suffering, subjective as well as objective, would appear to mark the highest type of professional ministry and calls into play, in connection with the most liberal knowledge of remedial measures, medical and clinical, the use of broad and fundamental principles of human psychology without which latter the office of physician is but fragmentarily filled. To understand how most helpfully to bridge this chasm of pain for the sick man, that the hiatus of more or less complete oblivion thereof may be his, is not so difficult where the pain is of the body and merely concerns irritated nerve terminations. We have here great resources in the domain of medicine, whose art and science may do wonderful things. But alleviations may be caused to penetrate much more deeply into the psycho-physical complex than can be produced merely by medicines and the direct relief thus obtained. They may be of such subtle, ethereal and immaterial character as to prove important factors in releasing that mysterious inhibition which rests upon the patient's psyche, restoring thereby the inestimable cooperation of hope and courage.

It is thus that we may do such far-reaching good through the ministry and use of our human sympathy and perceptions. Often the patient craves and needs

such comprehending sympathy most of all. He may easily fall into line and cooperate much more happily if he feels, first of all, that he is understood. Something lets go within him, some intangible resistance or opposition, if we have the skill or the grace to be able to set free within that indescribable feeling that he is going to be helped. He at once ceases to fret or to be tense or apprehensive, to continue that strange sort of blind resistance to the kindly healing forces nature is ever striving to press upon him. It is here that the soul-side of the sufferer may receive recognition for which there is in so many instances such a mighty hunger!

One of the most distinguished of our American surgeons and a man of international renown, once observed to the writer, with a manner of great conviction, that what we needed in our medical schools was "A chair devoted to teaching *how to get sick people well!*" He spoke this very feelingly because he himself had been ill and trying to get the above-mentioned much-needed help from his colleagues; and had discovered the to him startling fact that they did not seem able to put themselves into the sick man's place. To be sure he had received every courtesy at their hands; but somehow the laboring oar had invariably been thrown back upon himself. His point was that in applying for relief he had been counselled with, taken into consultation over his own case and his own judgment asked; but because he was the superior of every one of his professional

friends consulted, in some manner he seemed to have intimidated them so that they failed to enter into the proper relation of physician to patient—they lost sight of the primal *human* relation which must prevail before the sick soul permits the body to respond to the proffered help.

It was this physician's lot to come under the care of a much younger professional brother, who likewise felt at first intimidated at the thought of taking charge of a man so distinguished and experienced, and one who had for so many years occupied a position of undisputed authority at the very pinnacle of his profession. But the younger man thought that the famous surgeon was, after all, only a sick fellow-being and very much in need of doctoring and nursing. Indeed it seemed, as a part of this thought, that perhaps the nursing was no inconsiderable portion of the need.

Thereupon he gathered together all his courage and keeping firmly before him the primal need of the sick man, i.e., that he was in a condition quite unable to judge and care for himself and needed some one to assume authority, he spoke to him as follows: "Dr. Blank, I hope you will agree with me in the wisdom of concerning yourself not at all with the nature of the medicines I am about to give you. That you will let me treat you simply as I would any other patient, following my instructions without discussion, and throwing the entire responsibility of yourself upon my shoulders." A look of great relief came over the distinguished patient's face and he quickly said, with

a note of deep feeling, "Why, doctor, I have a broken and a contrite spirit and I hold up both my hands!" The surgeon proved to be as good as his word in every detail and conducted himself as an ideal patient. He never manifested the slightest desire to interfere or to be taken into consultation over himself. There was no least wish to discuss or debate the therapeutic scheme, but he realized with the contentment of a child the luxury of being cared and thought for. Incidentally, it should be added, it was the younger doctor's great privilege to see his distinguished colleague become well.

Out of such experiences, so touching in their exposition of fundamental human needs, a mighty truth stands revealed. May we be helped to remember that a sick human being is sailing under bare poles, with his primitive desires and needs pathetically crying for help! With the loss of his strength and self-confidence, unless there be present a broad and well-established foundation of spiritual development, and even under such circumstances at times, the erstwhile self-sufficient man may become as a child. Everyone's moral courage is closely linked to his physical, and the child-craving for help and care comes quickly to the surface in our hours of helplessness.

The physician, when first sitting in judgment upon his patient, is being watched with every sharpened sense of the sufferer. He should be keenly alive to this scrutiny and bear himself towards the patient as he, in turn, would like to feel the doctor's presence

react upon himself. Strength wherewith to get well may be inhibited or released within the patient, according to the impression he receives. Very rarely does the sick man desire to be treated as a consultant,—this is not the reason he summons the physician. The coming of the physician should bring to the patient the stimulation of new hope and courage and the feeling that now he may lean back upon a strong and wise resourcefulness. This fact alone will immediately begin its work of helpfulness, for the paralyzing effects of anxiety and the sense of lonely responsibility are allayed.

In the writer's earlier days of practice he had the privilege of being associated with a man of this character whose mere presence in the sick room was like unto a quickening glow of light and warmth in the hearts of his patients. It was of him that an unfortunate and almost speechless Irish railroad man with a badly crushed leg, lying upon the wooden platform of the station near the site of the wreck, said, in a loud and jubilant voice as though thereby galvanized into speech, as the doctor's heavy horse and carriage were heard thundering over the pavement, "Be Hivins, byes, I hear Dr. W——, 'tis already as though me leg was growin' on again!"

The writer well remembers the shiver of disgust which came over him, when, many years ago, he sat for the first time in the amphitheatre of a great German hospital. It was a surgical clinic and the presiding professor was attended by a bodyguard of

assistants, white-robed and thoroughly sterilized. Indeed it seemed from the countenances of some of these men that the process of sterilization had been wholly effective and had penetrated deeper than any mere microbic emergency should require. The tiered seats were filled with intent faces, there was an expectant hush, for the great teacher was about to demonstrate upon the body of a young woman of the poorer classes an operation involving a new technique.

The patient had not been anaesthetized since it was desired first to demonstrate the surgical condition as it appeared when the muscles were in their ordinary state of tonicity, the subsequent demonstration to take place under the relaxation of the anaesthetic. The examination and discussion which then took place could only be likened in its effects, as it was reflected upon the countenance of the tortured and frightened girl, to the thumb-screws and rack-and-pinion of the Inquisition! Alternations of hope and utter despair followed each other over her sensitive face, and though her trouble did not involve a fatal issue, she yet was permitted to pass many times over the threshold of a succession of deaths. The subsequent anaesthesia was a merciful relief but she had already suffered all tortures that the knife could have inflicted—and all these were wholly needless.

The professor was not at all necessarily an unfeeling man and doubtless was kind to his family—and may even at times have given to charity—but he assuredly was a thoughtless man and had forgotten that

true greatness in his profession never detaches itself from the humane. His own attitude of scientific abstraction only too quickly reflected itself upon his staff of assistants and they were obviously not in need of that kind of reinforcement.

At another time, in another lecture room in his own country, the writer, still a young man, shared with some of his fellow students in a feeling of righteous resentment at the ill-timed levity perpetrated by the professor to his assistants at the expense of the shrinkingly sensitive patient. The high calling of the profession of medicine seemed singularly profaned and desecrated by such exponents.

Not for one moment is it intended to imply that in either instance were these men unfeeling and heartless. Doubtless none might be more ready to respond to the call of charity and self-sacrifice upon their time and skill. They had merely dealt so much with the mechanics and material technique of their profession that they had forgotten the existence of the spiritual element resident in human beings. They needed the one essential experience,—that *fellow feeling* which makes us wondrous kind; they needed the power to put themselves into the patient's place and this they could not do because, doubtless, they had not themselves suffered in like manner to their patient and were therefore devoid of the much-needed delicacy of perception and consideration.

In connection with the subject of the operating room, the observed clinical phenomena resulting from

the effect of stimulating or depressing emotions upon the ultimate recovery of the patient, have caused a general recognition to begin to prevail in some hospitals and clinics, of the importance of giving psychic treatment as a preparation for surgical operations. Such patients are said to become calm and non-apprehensive, and to go under and emerge from anaesthesia more easily, and often to experience a much better post-operative reaction. This is quite in keeping with the experience of some obstetricians who have recognized that much may be done by psychic treatment, and in this connection the writer would venture to quote from the experiences of women who have expressed their grateful wonder that men could act so tenderly in their behalf, when no personal experience can possibly aid them in the knowledge of their ministration; assuredly here is a field for our finest efforts!

It is true that the modern obstetricians find suggestion capable of reaching women all along the dreary road of pregnancy, sustaining them in their hour of trial and more quickly restoring them to the normal of efficient motherhood. A sympathetic imagination, directed into practical channels, is a tremendously beneficent power, helping us intuitively to understand conditions from which we are mercifully spared.

We know that an organism may continue to go with apparent smoothness, although all the time carrying nearly or all the strain of which it is capable. It may be subject to a variety of strains, physical

and emotional, and may be likened to a vessel carrying a full load before a high wind with all sails drawing to their utmost. So long as the sails hold and the wind remains constant she staggers on, though strained in all her parts and doing the utmost of which she is capable. A shift of the wind, a stronger blow than usual, or one faulty move of the helm, and the strain, already perilously close to the breaking point, has reached its limit and the ship may founder.

There are many people who carry about with them conditions of a similar over-strain. They are worried daily in their business or in their social or domestic life. Their impaired digestions supply a steady stream of toxines, saturating the tissues and organs, and their emotional system is kept tense and keyed to the point of saturation. They are truly carrying all possible sail and they can tolerate any farther demand upon them but at their peril. Here is all preparation at hand for a breakdown. It may cause resort to alcohol or drug habituation; it may result in disease of the heart, arteries or kidneys; in neurasthenia, psychasthenia, insanity or suicide.

We must conclude that too much emphasis can not be laid upon the importance of a better study of that intricate relationship which exists between the delicate and complex mechanism of the mind and the functions of the body. A host of minor impressions, whether they be physical or coming through the mind or the emotions, may become cumulative. Such accumulations, if continued, can eventually produce but

one result. They will either overflow upon other nerve centres and produce explosions at some remote point, or they will cause some other connected organ to become involved which, having a lesser degree of resistance, may go to the wall.

Here, by close observation of an attention to symptoms that may not always seem pertinent to the immediate subject at issue, we may find ourselves able to reduce the sum total of the system strain and prevent what might prove to be the last straw, from breaking the long-tried endurance of the organism.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SIDE ISSUES

There is current a rather natural feeling among chronic sufferers and variants that, in order to get well, some very particular kind of specialized treatment must be undergone. Such specialization as regards diet is frequently necessary, particularly for short periods of time, although the day of exclusive feeding is largely in the past. There are times when it is indeed quite necessary to restrict oneself closely and rarer occasions when it may be necessary to do so all one's life. But eventually, in most instances, the diet may become speedily enlarged, reversions to the more limited being made from time to time, in order to give the needed intervals of rest to the not yet recovered digestive power.

The day of all beefsteak and hot water, as practiced some forty years ago with considerable vogue is behind us. It was by no means wholly a fad since it contained some elements of truth which in the light of modern knowledge of digestive disorders becomes interpretable, but the modicum of truth therein unquestionably was put to a severe strain. Likewise is there an end to concentrated food and food extracts, since

these were greatly over-estimated. They, too, were backed by a fragmentary truth which has now assumed more nearly its proper value. Today, in the minds of most physicians, digestive ferments as aids to digestion come well within the debatable territory and such extreme views as no meat at all in the dietary are not well sustained, particularly if we take a broad view of the anatomical peculiarities of the animal, man.

If Louis Agassiz had found in the glacial drift the jaw-bone of an animal with such teeth as ours and no other traces of the animal existed, he could have come to but one conclusion. His inference would have been that an animal that had cutting, tearing and grinding teeth could have been nothing else but omnivorous. If subsequently he could then have come upon great numbers of these creatures, living in all parts of the world from the equator to the poles, his conclusion based upon the single jaw-bone would have been justified. He would have found men living entirely upon meat and blubber in the Arctic regions, where nothing but animal food occurred; entirely upon cereals and vegetable matter where nothing but these were to be had; and as readily upon all in such regions where all were abundant. Should man be obliged for a time to practice exclusiveness and have to confine himself to any one of these forms of food, he could do so for a variable period of time.

Such grotesque fads as the exclusive eating of uncooked vegetables, a barbarism practiced within less

than a thousand miles from any large centre of population in our own country, occur in a state of nature only with the most primitive savages, and rarely with them, since man has discovered the use of fire. Only one other illustration of the reversional possibilities existing in civilized man need be mentioned here. This is the doctrine that a certain amount of sand, taken every day, is conducive to health and good digestion. This cult, headed, one must regretfully state by a clergyman, a few years ago had its centre in the middle West. It fortified itself by the analogy that chickens ate sand! The conclusions of a broader experience, wherein the illuminating tendencies of a more accurate knowledge of human chemistry are balanced up with a more comprehensive view of man, are reassuring. That he is a creature capable of great adaptations does not argue specialization in diet for any length of time.

It may be even whispered that there are no analogies in nature which would justify the consciously prolonged mastication of our food. That this is a procedure which might be cultivated to advantage by some individuals, the writer readily concedes. There is a vast difference between bolting the food and masticating it. It is only carnivorous animals who legitimately may bolt their food and one may see his dog do this any day. But the dog is living quite within his anatomical rights since he has no grinding teeth of any consequence and it so happens that meat and even bones will dissolve themselves in his stomach. That the cow should chew her food a very long time is again

quite clearly outlined by nature, as witness the superb grinding equipment with which she is furnished.

No new truth has come to us in the doctrine of thorough mastication, for it is an old one reflected from a fresh angle. A broad scanning of the horizon shows us no royal road to health save by a sane, conservative course. Thereby only do we avoid extremes. These latter but take away the attention from things of which we should not lose sight. With regard to the regulation of the diet in cases of feeble digestion, or in those in whom digestive disturbances are at the root of their psychic or nervous troubles, the object in such regulation or selection is but to make the processes of solution and absorption easier. It is less a matter of the nutritive value of what we eat, as of the power of any individual digestive apparatus to utilize it.

In our country most people have an excess of nutritive material placed before them. All food may be said to be nutritive, although it may differ greatly in relative values. We may be able to extract and absorb the nutritive content of one article more easily than of another, even though it may represent a lesser degree of nutritive equivalent. The old adage that "what is one man's meat, etc.," is based upon the recognition of different capacities in different individuals.

When we then restrict ourselves in the quantity or nature of our food, we do it merely that there may be less tax upon the digestive powers for the time being. In the case of exhaustive illness we may give more highly concentrated or soluble foods in order that the

organism may get the greatest value for the minimum amount of expenditure. But such feeding is only for emergencies and not adapted to the chronic invalid. In the latter case the object must be to raise the level of the digestive capacity, and it will be found that this can be done in an amazing manner. But this is not accomplished by contenting oneself with getting along upon as little food as one can live upon. It would be found that the gradual increase of the amount of food ingested is not accompanied by an increase of discomfort, the latter remaining much the same, but there will ensue a noticeable increase of strength.

With the increase of nutrition, and therefore of strength, the digestive capacity also grows greater and there will follow a lessening of discomfort from this source. It is a natural impulse to shrink from discomfort and in consequence we find large numbers of invalids who remain such, because they have not been taught that the way to escape from their enfeebled digestions is not to run away from them, but courageously to face and overcome them. The educative helps of the physician are in such cases very much needed, for the patient is in a condition of more or less panic and is inclined to yield to the dominant instinct of fear. More chronic invalids may be helped out of their distresses through the educative ministrations of the physician than by many other measures which are too often temporizing.

As regards the conduct and activities of the Variant, there is here also no *one specific* thing that he can do

which will in itself lead to the betterment of his condition. A larger skill and judgment is required than that which merely says to him to sleep out of doors, or to have his chamber window open in winter as in summer, or to play golf or saw or chop wood. All or any of these things, if they should prove to be adapted to his needs, may be helpful, but none of them are in themselves specific.

The object of all exercise is to stimulate the circulation through the use of the muscles and this, for various reasons, can not be brought about in every person in the same way. There are individuals in whom the use of certain groups of muscles is always followed by an increased strain or irritation of the nervous system, the continuance of which would only do harm. With such the muscles in question are probably already overstrained and need to be relieved and rested by the intelligent use and development of other sets of muscles which may be under-used. Again the individual may be fond of walking, which he does easily, but because of the already sufficient development of the walking muscles little good may come to him through their continued use. He may in such case be much benefited were he to use the muscles of the thorax and abdomen and would thereby increase his breathing capacity and develop the power of the diaphragm.

Many are greatly benefited for this reason, who resort to the picturesque exercise of sawing or chopping wood. It is very interesting to observe what this may

do for one in whom the abdominal muscles are flabby or whose respiratory capacity is limited. Sawing wood is unusually well adapted to the needs of all grades of muscular and respiratory insufficiency since it can be so admirably graduated to the patient's powers and requirements. Few other forms of exercise, whether work or sport, yield so much deep breathing and increased circulation in so short a time and in such controllable dosage.

Golf is rightly considered a most exhilarating form of out-of-door exercise and its popularity is the best index of its value. Tennis is distinctly a violent exercise and not suited to the middle aged unless they have always continued the play from youth. The wood lot and the chopping of trees is perhaps the grandest outlet for the expenditure of a man's energies since it brings with it the consciousness of something of real value achieved. There would appear to be something peculiarly primal in the instinct that leads so many men in middle or advanced life to the felling of trees! But this is an exercise that is almost prohibitory for women because of the non-development of their arm and wrist muscles, making the risk of accident too great.

It is not intended to enumerate the many varied ways in which a man or woman may use his muscles in work or play,—they may all serve a helpful purpose, needing only to be rationally used and in a manner adapted to the peculiar needs of the individual. But just here there is need of caution that the remedy be

not made the means of harm. A college professor once said to the writer that he found one hour of golf to be good for him, but could not understand why two hours of it did him harm! Having only a limited amount of muscular strength he merely had reached and gone beyond that point wherein he could normally react from the fatigue. The over-fatigue had supersaturated the system with waste matter—the result of combustion—and it took a disproportionately long time for the normal balance to become re-established.

This patient in addition had been spending the larger part of each day in a very taxing kind of work, that of teaching, and he was not able to make much further outlay of force of any kind. Here it is appropriate to voice the caution that people who are making a considerable daily drain upon themselves in the expenditure of nervous energy, be it what it may, have very little left to expend in muscular effort. If they would do the latter they must do less of the former. The man who has worked hard with his muscles all day has little energy left for brain-work at night. Conversely, the brain worker may need the physical exercise but he will need to abate somewhat upon his mental work, in order that he shall not burn his candle at both ends.

The "fresh air" factor in the process of well-getting seems almost to have become a cult. One meets with people who have made living in the outdoor air the primary object of their lives. They live in it by day and sleep in it by night, expecting that in some

mysterious manner their ills will be relieved or possible prospective ones averted. With the exception of the unquestioned great benefit of this treatment, with the adjunct of rest and high-feeding, obtained in tuberculosis, it is difficult to see what is accomplished for the ordinary patient, unless he happens to be the victim of obvious unsanitary environmental conditions in the home or shop or factory. If we observe the people whose waking day is spent entirely in the open, like day laborers or field hands, or farmers, we must recognize that there is no special immunity which they enjoy over the average person whose waking hours are spent indoors. It may truthfully be argued that such people furnish no standard for comparison, since their lives may be unhygienic as regards food and their indoor habits. The farmer who lives in the open all day, but eats imperfectly prepared food and sleeps in close or contaminated bed-chambers may very easily counteract all the good the open air gives him. But on the other hand the writer has failed to observe, and he believes the concurrence of medical men to be with him, that anything is gained by the faddish devotion to so-called fresh air, practiced rather objectionably by many semi-invalids of the intelligent and well-to-do classes.

There have come to his notice numerous cases wherein nothing would satisfy the patient short of a polar temperature in chamber or house, to the degree of securing for himself undisputed immunity from the company of friends or family! Assuredly it can

not be shown other than that the average man or woman, well or ill, remains well or makes as good a recovery under the ordinary and reasonable accepted standards of fresh air and ventilation, as the person who is obtrusively bathed in an excess of out-of-doors. In the summer time the quest for fresh air is undeniably justified, but the thing oftenest sought is cooler air. Our cities give neither, but in the country, where the air is undoubtedly pure, we still find the quest for fresh air to be really one for a cooler temperature or a breeze that will displace the blanket of vitiated air hanging around us. During all the cooler months our houses may be abundantly supplied with fresh air simply through the rational use of such ordinary means of ventilation as are provided. If the air outside is fairly cold, a window, partly opened, will effectively displace enough of the air in the room in a few moments to give its occupant a great sense of relief, the rate of speed being merely proportioned to the relative temperature of the air within the room and of that without. No draft or cross-current is needed, as in the summer, when the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperature is nil. Cold air from without, if the window be raised but a few inches, will flow in as would a stream of water and by reason of its greater heaviness cause the warmer air within to give way before it in all directions.

But an excess of cold air in a chamber is not necessarily an excess of fresh air, "freshness" being that property of the air wherein it is sufficiently supplied

with oxygen and is devoid of humidity and of the waste products thrown off from our lungs and our skins. It is easily demonstrable that a body of warm air that is uncontaminated by the exhalations from our bodies may be much more desirable than one of cold air vitiated by the presence of people. The good effects of cold air, observed in certain cases of serious or acute illness, are due more to the special tonic effect of the cold than to the possible increased amount of oxygen thereby obtained.

Much practical help has recently been given us towards the solution of the fresh-air problem and the bugaboo of what constitutes bad air has been happily cleared up. We now know that a person may live for a long time in a very small space with an exceedingly limited amount of air, without suffering the least distress, provided only that he keeps this small amount of air repeatedly in motion. We have been shown that, unless the air is agitated, i.e., repeatedly "stirred" much as one would stir up several different fluids in a tumbler with a spoon, a number of different grades of pure and impure air may lie side by side for an indefinite time without the least admixture taking place!

Herein lies the explanation of the distress we experience when one or more people find themselves *sitting*, for any length of time, in a closed room. It matters not at all whether the room be large or small; it matters only that they remain stationary! In a very short time our bodies become surrounded by an atmosphere of exhalation from our lungs and skin

which is full of excrementitious matter and moisture. The presence of moisture in this aura of our own emanations serves speedily as a non-conducting blanket, preventing further evaporation from the skin, and we thus soon become supercharged with that waste material we need to constantly discharge. The result soon follows in headache, restlessness and malaise.

Our distresses, however, in the above circumstances have been induced because we did not know that the bad air from our bodies clings closely about us; we used to suppose that the vitiated air was continually and busily mixing itself with the purer air in remoter parts of the room. We supposed that a dipper-full of the air of a space thus occupied by few or many people, taken from different parts of the room, would show a gradually increasing and an equal degree of deterioration. But we now know that this is quite erroneous; we know that the air a yard or two away from us may be very much better than that which so closely hugs our bodies, and that the air in the remoter corners of the room may be as fresh as it was before the room was occupied. We have learned that if one or more electric fans were to be introduced into this room, and the air thoroughly agitated, all discomfort would immediately leave us until such time as our "emanation-blanket" had established itself again, whereupon suitable mixing of the air would again bring relief. This might be done many times before it became really necessary to exchange the volume of air in the room for a new one.

With regard to climate, there is again no specific for any of us. The longing within the human heart for some favored spot upon the earth where the conditions are such that all our ills fall from us, is universal. Ponce de Leon had it when he sought in Florida the Fountain of Youth. But, as with food or exercise or medicine, all climates will be good or otherwise, depending upon the particular need of any given individual. Man can be well and happy under many diverse and seemingly contradictory conditions. We need not go far from our homes to find health since it is chiefly to be found by practising healthful ways, wherever we may be.

Another important matter for consideration with the chronic invalid is the matter of medicine. Herein we are met with an almost universal belief, deeply rooted, that there must exist somewhere and somehow, some particular medicine which will prove a specific for our disorder. It is difficult to account for the origin of this belief since it does not appear to exist among primitive races but rather with the civilized. Doubtless from the fact that so many cures and reliefs are actually obtained by means of medicine, it is not so strange that the generality of people should develop the feeling that there must be a cure for all disorders. Nor do we know that this may not eventually prove true to at least a much larger degree than at present, though it is quite obvious how pernicious an effect such blind faith in the potential and automatic curative power of a "remedy" might have, in undermining the first and

infinitely greater condition of remaining or getting well, namely, an intelligent conception of the laws of health.

As it is, with such aids to the restoration to health as diet, fresh air, exercise and other well-known therapeutic measures, medicine in its rightful place is an invaluable adjunct. There are countless times when without the aid of medicine disease would prove fatal or recovery be imperfect or retarded, when no such issue need result. Medicine is the only agent we can employ in many cases where by no other known means would we be able happily to influence the functions of the various organs of the body. Without the aid of modern medicine man would again sit by, helplessly, as in bygone ages, and see his fellow-man suffer countless distresses and deaths from which today he can be saved. But were we to look upon medicine as a specific against any and all disorders, as a remedy which in some mysterious way is to ferret out the pain and disease and overcome it, much as a powerful magnet would draw unto itself a piece of steel, the real helpfulness of medicine in disease would be abolished and our attitude would again be that of primitive man towards his fetich.

Medicine, and all other agents which experience has shown to be capable of influencing the functions of the body, represent a part of the sum of human knowledge in the interpretation of such functions. They are to be wisely employed in assisting, but never in replacing them. The thoughtless man continues to

eat his indigestible dinner, following it with a dose of medicine, assuming that the wrong which he is doing to nature will be righted by the drug. Should nature resent this he will take more of it, change his doctor or, the worst crime of all against his intelligence, resort to some nostrum which is publicly announced as being "good for" his supposed disorder! It is upon this element of credulity in human nature that the unprincipled drug fakir maintains his prosperity. If the magnitude of such prosperity be admitted as an index to the degree of human gullibility, the latter is humiliatingly great!

The aim of the physician should be to point out to his patient, provided the latter will use his intelligence and submit his obedience, how invaluable all these different aids may be as adjuncts to his own physiological powers, in getting well. The problem of sane living is in itself difficult enough, even with all the aids we have, to justify the warning that we cannot afford to mistake the shadow for the substance and lean upon supports that should be merely crutches and bridges.

CHAPTER XV

SURVIVING, THE REWARD OF STRIVING

To the class of people termed the Variants belong many individuals who represent the best that we have in music, art, literature and science. They often-times appear peculiarly gifted as though the regulation equipment which nature denied them in one direction, were compensated for in another. It would appear that a certain degree of physiological stability needed to be lacking, in order to bring into prominence the presence of other faculties and permit them to expand. The writer has spoken elsewhere of the deviation of the variant as the swinging of the pendulum away from the perpendicular, this being but an expression of the tendency to sport. By such opportunity faculties are released which might otherwise remain passive.

Those personally acquainted, professionally or intimately with this class of people well know that the heights to which they soar have corresponding valleys. But it is quite possible that too much allowance may be made for such fluctuations to be really helpful to them. We are apt to wink at the so-called eccentricities of genius, and the genius, unfortunately, knows

it! It does not appear that, because an individual is capable of superior attainments in music or art, he need feel justified in permitting his fences in other directions to go out of repair. A certain defiance of the conventionalities is an affectation frequently seen in the artistic temperament, which might be amusing in itself, did it not occasionally go along with the infringing of the rights of others.

It is likely that in an individual in whom certain talents have become noticeably specialized or developed, an already existing leaning thereto was present at the beginning; that he found it quite easy and natural to do some things well, without needing to bring to them any unusual effort. In such case it would be natural for him to follow the lines of least resistance and continue to exert his energy in a manner that gave him the most reward for the least expenditure. But in consequence of such increasing specialization the collateral development of other faculties, or other traits of character, is likely to suffer a neglect that soon makes apparent a one-sidedness which may be akin to unbalance. Mathematical prodigies and musical blind Toms might come under the above extremes. The itinerant ready-reckoner who astonishes the ordinary mind with his bewildering celerity in the midst of formidable ranks of figures, is not by any means straining his powers of thought or concentration. He merely dips into his subconsciousness and there sees the answer; the figures have arranged themselves and the deductive process done

itself, automatically, without his conscious assistance.

Setting aside, however, such instances, wherein the pathological appears to obtrude itself so obviously, we must admit that many gifted people are one-sided, where it would appear they might be more evenly developed. If care and devotion could be given to these neglected sides of their character or mentality, it is quite within the bounds of the reasonable to suppose that the world would be the gainer. Genius really has time enough to devote some to the consideration of its needs in other directions and the inherent soundness of the special talent would in no wise suffer. Do we not at such times instinctively hesitate at the ultimatum of genius, when we know it to be accompanied by hazy perceptions through the practical or moral atmosphere?

Departing from the consideration of individuals who are conspicuous for their specialized development, we know many people, or even belong to them ourselves, who have a considerable degree of burden-bearing to do. From these we must always exclude those who are organically or specifically handicapped. Such individuals of the type variant find life to be real and earnest and need to remember, for the reinforcement of the spirit, that the "Grave is not its Goal." Such need to make effort to be serene, brave and persistent. It is not so easy for them as they could wish, or as they see it to be in the other person. They are often tempted to sink under the ever-present burden of conscious effort.

Yet it is to this class that is given the choicest gift to man, the *opportunity to strive*, masked under the cloak of stern necessity. Through all Nature runs the principle of the *need of striving*, that *there may be surviving!* Why do we not more understandingly apply the law to our own case? The man who is at his ease is content therewith, and continues to keep his seat. Only he seeks and finds a better one, who is not wholly at his ease. The Divine Discontent is by no means to be solely interpreted in a spiritual sense; it has a rather broad application. There are millions of men and women living wholesome lives because they are driven by the *necessity of work* for themselves or their own. This is their blessing and not their curse. The curse would become evident to many were the need removed.

A wealthy and indulgent husband whose wife, suffering with a slight melancholia, was under the care of the writer, was his companion on a railway journey. Pointing through the window at a modest farm house which appeared and vanished as the train whisked by, he asked, "Would my wife have escaped her illness had she lived there and been obliged to do her own work?" "She undoubtedly would," was the writer's conviction. Hers was an instance wherein the absence of incentive created the "damping off" of the spirit.

The existence of handicaps is often truly enough a demonstrable fact. But if the handicap is not in its nature a fatal one; if it is an infirmity of function, an

undevelopment of character, an expression merely of a more or less deviation of the plummet from a state of ease, or well-being, or contentment, the faint heart may have courage anew, for to it belongs the privilege to conquer. To these sufferers, who constitute the great majority, the physician may come with a message of life. There lingers in the minds of most people the subconscious conviction that there exists a remedy for every disease or disorder, could it but be found. Many there are, more the pity, who think the nostrum and patent medicine man has found the particular thing they need because he tells them so himself in the newspaper. Suffering and ignorant humanity reaches out blindly and grasps at the promise which, sold so cheaply, is upon so broad and generous a scale. But the physician should be first of all a teacher, and it is his teacher's privilege to inculcate something far better into the minds and souls of his people than the practice of this primitive delusion.

Since there does not as yet seem to exist a specific and material remedy for every disorder, is it not of the utmost importance that our patient should know it? He must not be permitted to neglect his character-traits by thinking all ailments he suffers from to be of the body, to be somehow mysteriously relieved by introducing therein a specific remedy. That there would seem to be no specific remedy for every disease, whether of mind or body, has opened the door to the "Christian Scientist" who could not have risen

up were not humanity ceaselessly seeking, and his arrival upon the scene of human suffering is opportune with these times of vague mental and spiritual unrest.

But the "Scientist" is equally tainted with the same kind of blind mysticism in another direction, because he permits himself to believe that, since it is true that some ailments are not of the body, but of the mind or soul, therefore none are of the body, and all specific remedies are vain things! The broad outlook, the thoughtful perspective, the evidence of the relentlessness of the laws of physiology and the violations thereof, the willingness to receive testimony—in short, the understanding mind *and* heart are employed in neither case.

Help is that which all men seek who are suffering in either body or spirit, and the remedy must be adapted to the need; but such adaptation cannot be unless the nature of the need be broadly interpreted and we become convinced that in so many of the disorders of our human brethren we can not truly help unless we enlist the cooperation of the man's emotional and spiritual forces,—until we consciously set about releasing that wonderful lifting power which comes through the stimulation of the psychic resources.

A sane and broad interpretation of the condition of the Variant is only possible when we remember that his needs are both of mind and body. He suffers all over, both in the consciousness of physical discomfort and in the lack of mental and spiritual harmony. We cannot expect to arrive at a concrete estimate of

his condition from one examination in the consulting room, since this would argue an almost superhuman penetration on the physician's part and an impossible power of self-analysis in the patient. When such patients present themselves to the physician they usually have already consulted others and they often come with the fear of further failure in their hearts. The patient is likely to be apprehensive lest he be again but imperfectly understood, and often disheartened at the need of telling his story all over again. This fear should by all means be neutralized by the physician and he should be given every encouragement to express himself and be listened to with sympathy and understanding.

It is the practice of some physicians, now happily growing rarer, to maintain towards their patients a sphinx-like solemnity and an oracular manner, a relic of the medicine-man of savage races and the priest-craft of ancient ones. With savage and primitive people medicine was but a rudimentary craft, associated with superstition. What cures took place were chiefly due to the influence of the mind upon the body, for there was no knowledge of the latter. The medicine-man learned that fear, intimidation and claims to supernatural powers were forceful levers, which would produce results upon human ignorance and credulity.

Today the practice of medicine is for the enlightenment of the people, it is for man's better understanding of himself. It is a department of human knowledge which seeks to bring man into a better under-

standing of the physiological laws of his being and their close relation with those of his spiritual and mental self. It seeks to teach him that he is not a mere animated mechanism, to be dealt with by scales and measurements and chemical formulae, but that there is also a soul side, intricately interwoven with his body cells, which cannot be ignored. The patient, therefore, should be encouraged in every way to unburden his mind and heart and get into the way of crystallizing his thought. If "Confession is good for the soul" it is no less good that his haunting fears, his doubts and also his feeble self-assurances should be freely ventilated. Half-voiced fears dwindle in size the moment they are frankly discussed. Nothing is so surely corrosive as a fear a long time nursed. If one wishes to become convinced of this let him go to a sympathetic and understanding friend and talk freely of his own secret troubles, and observe what a strange lightness of spirit will ensue!

The writer has often had occasion to marvel over the relief that would come to a patient who has for the first time been permitted wholly to talk himself out: One illustration will serve as a type of many instances, occurring with a scholarly woman in the prime of her years. Her first consultation with the doctor lasted several hours, the patient doing all of the talking. She talked in a manner as though apprehensive lest there might not be time enough given her. During this talk she repeatedly stated that she would need to talk several hours for a number of days,

in order to explain herself properly. Concerning this she was cordially reassured and the next day's consultation was opened with the same eager narration of symptoms. At the close of the first hour, however, the patient's reminiscences and recitals began to flag, whereupon she was encouraged by suggestions and questions to tell more. This was done in fullest sympathy, since there were many points not touched upon, which the doctor desired to have cleared up. But upon the third day the patient, much to her own surprise and very obvious relief, found she had no more to say and seemed happily elated that she had actually gone through with the whole narration and had survived! This woman had doubtless never been helped to condense the vapor of vague distress and fear, which hung around her consciousness like a fog, into a few drops or crystals of concrete thought,—but the relief experienced was marked. She never thereafter felt that she had very much to explain, but permitted the doctor to interpret her to herself.

The American patient of average intelligence instinctively demands that his intelligence shall be respected and he should be instructed and appealed to that his cooperation may become enlisted. If it is the physician's office to teach, and to help his patient to become his own master ultimately, then the chronic sufferer must be enabled to understand and should be labored with unto that end. An acute illness is self-limited and the patient may be guided and carried through it even if unconscious, but

not so with a chronic one. Here the patient must be the doctor's coadjutor and taught to observe and think for himself.

He will need to be taught that though his digestion may be disordered, and may need rational attention through the channels of diet, this course alone will hardly be likely to accomplish everything. That though he may need to have the nature of his exercise determined, this may or may not be a matter of great importance. That though there will undoubtedly be the need of some medicine, yet medicine alone will not serve to neutralize his troubles. That though his psychic or emotional balance be disturbed, attention to this alone will not make him well. To *all* of these things it will be necessary to call his attention, to enlist his understanding, and secure his willing and thoughtful cooperation.

The patient may listen to all of these explanations willingly but it will be found that most of them will appear to him meaningless at first. He has his own ideas of his condition and needs and he cannot be expected to have these displaced at once. In such a case the perceptive physician has the opportunity of gradually displacing the patient's preconceived ideas by the objective demonstration of more correct ones. If the patient insists that his troubles are all "nervous" it should not take long to demonstrate to him that skillful attention to his stomach or bowels is capable of materially influencing his "nervousness" for the better. (Sometimes one wishes that the word

"nervous" had never been coined since it so effectively misinterprets and mystifies the patient.) If he argues that a reasonable and desirable article of food has always disagreed with him, it can usually be demonstrated that it is far less likely to be the food than the digestive function that is at fault and that this can be remedied.

The self-interpretations of the patient are nearly always the greatest obstacles—often far greater than the illness itself. The instinctive impulse to shrink from pain or discomfort—the lack of understanding that many discomforts cannot possibly be escaped from until they are first philosophically tolerated—constitutes one of the greatest obstacles in chronic invalidism. The skill rightly to distinguish the value of the relative factors in the patient's symptom-complex demands cultivated perceptive faculties, sound knowledge of disease, and a broad sympathy with human nature. With this equipment many a mountain may be caused to resolve itself into a modest rise of ground which lends agreeable variety to the plain of life.

CHAPTER XVI

CRYSTALLIZATION

In the re-education of the Variant we need to apply the same principles above mentioned to practically every case of chronic invalidism. We are to treat the particular bodily needs of the patient in whatever manner may be required, but we shall always find him involved in a residuum of psychological snares as well. The unraveling of these requires constant association with him, since he is ever presenting new phases of his state of mind which, if perceived, give the physician the immediate opportunity to meet them in a manner best suited to their needs.

There is a general need, which chronic invalids who suffer with psychic and so-called nervous disturbances have in common, of being helped towards intelligent and concrete expression and interpretation. It would hardly seem credible that a person, unhappy and hampered in his efficiency by reason of an undue consciousness of his discomforts, could be thus promptly relieved for the time being! Yet this, oftentimes, is not only possible as the result of a first talk with a patient, but may become a practice which he himself

is enabled to follow to ultimate overcoming of his abnormal state of mind.

This does not apply in all senses to the hypochondriac, however, who finds a morbid pleasure in the narration of his symptoms. In such case only infrequent recitals should be allowed and these as concrete as possible. But even here it is helpful to give the patient every opportunity in the beginning to unburden himself and even he will discover, to his surprise, that his well of misery is not as deep as he thought, and may be betrayed into a reluctant smile at the discovery.

In entering upon the discussion of a patient's mental state—attempting to formulate his psychic symptoms and arriving at their relative significance and values—even though the physician feels assured that nothing vital is at fault, it would be neither a true or tactful statement promptly to say that nothing is the matter. In the absence of all objective signs of actual disease, and in the presence of a patient whose recital of symptoms is profuse, the temptation to reassure him may easily lead to the overlooking of his real subjective distress.

Something is the matter since the patient obviously suffers, even though it be not in any of his vital organs, and the kind of distress he endures may be infinitely keener than though his life were endangered. Disease, pain, mental or emotional distress are all confusing things in the consciousness of the one who suffers—depending upon the degree, manner and nature of

what is involved—and it is his right to have the doctor deal with them sympathetically and respectfully.

It is easier to get the patient to take the cheerful viewpoint when the doctor can get him to laugh with him, rather than that he should feel himself being laughed at. Many a patient feels a diffidence in narrating symptoms some of which appear even to himself almost fantastic, and such a person, conscious of the unusual and irregular character of his feelings, may not unnaturally feel afraid to put them into words, lest his own fears of mental abnormality become justified in the mind of his hearer. In such case whatever means will lead to the freest confidence and expression on his part will most surely help towards the speedier relief of his distress.

It is a matter of the greatest helpfulness to enable the patient suffering with obsessive ideas and persistent fears to talk out his feelings, yet this is often a difficult thing to do and calls for the utmost patience. There would appear to be a spell of inhibition resting upon the power of the invalid to detach himself from his feelings, to which he appears to cling as though they were his most precious possessions. Indeed, as some one has said, he would appear to “argue for” his illness, rather than against it! But this tenacious clinging to our fears is merely an inversion of our desire to be relieved of them, since by so doing we hope to elicit ever stronger and more convincing arguments to the contrary. Fear also takes a subtle part in our oft-time reluctance to admit improvement—

lest there follow again a disappointment—and it is this which probably lay at the root of the cautious reply given the writer by the Scottish lady who, after making a noticeable convalescence and in answer to his assertion that she was now much better, with seeming reluctance admitted that she was “na worrse!”

Even persons suffering with certain forms of mental depression allied to the psychoses, who ordinarily are able to talk and to follow conversation, are immensely relieved for a time by being helped to express their worst fears regarding themselves. The distress of such a patient lies in the fact that he cannot rid himself of the obsessive character of his moods and any break in their continuity is a positive relief, though it be but fleeting. The writer has known patients who, after being induced to put into words the fearsome character of their thoughts, have experienced hours of happy relief, the precursor of more permanent results.

The writer has elsewhere likened the attitude of a patient suffering in this manner to one who is surrounded by a dense fog, or a cloud of smoke—his feeling having produced an atmosphere which envelops him so effectively that for all practical purposes it might embrace the entire landscape. The attitude of such persons is characteristic inasmuch as they appear preoccupied and oblivious to what is going on about them and are only imperfectly aroused to giving attention to conversation or occurrences.

But many patients of this class can be taught to tell how they feel, though it may at first prove diffi-

cult, and the telling to an understanding and sympathetic listener seems to collect the vapor of their emotional fog and condense it into a few rain drops—with a resultant clearing of the atmosphere. This process of clarification, however, needs to become for a time a continuous practice with the patient since the old mood has, by virtue of possession and habit the right of way, and this, too, must be taught him, lest he become disappointed and discouraged.

An interesting instance of the benefit of such method of "condensation" in a case of kleptomaniac impulse was that of a lady patient. She was told that, each time the desire came into her consciousness to secrete in her trunk a book which did not belong to her, she was to sit down at her desk and write out just exactly what was passing in her thoughts. It should be explained that such obsessions do not arise in the mind of the victim as a clearly defined thought, but as a vague feeling or impulse only. When she thereupon sat down to try to formulate into more concrete form, and therefore into words, what had existed only in the form of a compelling impulse or feeling, such attempt at crystallization resolved itself into the words "I am about to secrete a book which does not belong to me—to steal it——" and became in her case at once an impossibility and an absurdity.

In another instance, that of a man, there was present a strikingly marked doubting phobia, a phobia of indecision. He had the most painful feeling of uncertainty as to whether he had turned off the water

faucets upon leaving the house. He had known himself to unlock and re-enter his house twenty times and examine the faucets before being finally willing to leave the premises. This man, proving upon experiment to be an excellent subject for hypnotic suggestion, was in this state given positive suggestion that he would no longer be troubled in this absurd manner but would shut off the faucet the first time and never think of it thereafter. In this case matters were greatly simplified since it was possible to reach so directly the patient's subconsciousness with a positive suggestion of a normal character—which promptly prevailed. But in a much larger number of instances mental and emotional distresses are more vague, yet producing disability and inefficiency enough sadly to impair the happiness of the sufferer. Mere patient explanation in such cases, of just how easily one's own psychology may trip him, and how relatively simple the remedy may be, the following case may demonstrate.

A lady given to literary pursuits found herself quite inhibited from writing for a period of a year, having accomplished no more during that time than she had formerly been able to do in a month. She would sit down at her table to begin to write, feeling her mind full of material, but no sooner had she begun than there would come over her an inability to express herself, quickly followed by impatience and finally by

intense anger. The latter feelings came upon her as a surprise, though never failing to be present as a sequence, whereupon no more work was possible. When first questioned the above sequence of events had not been brought out and she was unable to explain what took place, save that she seemed to become hopelessly involved in her mind and feelings and simply could obtain no further results. It was only after further questioning and attempts to get her to think and explain, that she was enabled to crystallize into words what had been a mere haze of distressing feeling.

It was thus shown that she really was unable to write because a foreign emotion, one of anger, was permitted to steal in and take possession of the front of her consciousness, thus effectively displacing the matter in hand, namely the intention to write. It was explained to her that sluggishness of brain might be easily excusable and that this could not always be expected to yield to force of will, but that the super-vention of the emotion of impatience or anger was a matter made possible purely through the passive and unguarded assent of the individual and was never defensible. Few occurrences in our daily life are so stupid or so unpardonable as that of permitting the emotion of anger to arise and no emotion, save that of fear, is so completely obstructive and destructive to our efficiency and sanity.

She was instructed to sit down at her table prepared to write and if the ideas would not come and the thought not flow, she was merely to continue to sit. It

was not to matter if she did not deliver herself of a sentence during the hour, but under no circumstances was she to yield to any other feeling but one of perfect serenity. She was to meet all of the requirements for writing—pen, paper and seclusion—and was to feel herself responsible only for the maintenance of the proper attitude of mind. When thus the simple conditions were established she found herself sorely tempted to yield to the impulse of impatience, upon the heels of which the absurd emotion of anger would have surely followed. Being a person of character, however, and having grasped the significance of the explanation of the manner in which the door being slightly pried open to admit of one emotion, the succeeding one would find easier entrance, she took pains to maintain her serene attitude and within ten days was able to do her usual average of work! To the question why an intelligent person should so easily have permitted herself to be handicapped, the answer would be that we are all doing, to some degree, similar things all the time unless it is our good fortune to be jarred, or have our attention sharpened to a recognition of the fatal ease with which we are capable of obstructing our own gait.

The frequent feeling of inadequacy experienced by brain workers is usually capable of solution along similar lines. It is hardly supposable that a man called upon to teach in a college, or to preach to a critical audience, or to transact business in the midst of keen competition should not be subject to a strenu-

ous demand upon his highest efficiency. So long as his digestive functions are good, and he is leading a rational life as regards exercise and recreation and is happy in his family relations and there is no undue strain upon him, he holds his own and is happy. Should, however, his digestive processes not continue to function happily, or some other condition arise likely to upset his carefully adjusted balance, he is in a fair way to develop a psychic disequilibrium.

Once his consciousness awakened to the *perception* of *himself*, whether the symptoms pertain to his body, his emotions or to any flaw in mental efficiency, there may become released a host of possible fears and distrusts and resultant incapacities. "Brain fag," "neurasthenia" and other spectres rise up before him and he is likely to cease to be the reasonable and unconscious-of-self being that he had been, and to yield to the slavery of fear. His efficiency is then likely to drop many degrees more than is justified by his actual condition and he becomes greatly in need of being helped to analyze and understand himself.

It is noticeable that in many—probably most—of such cases the resultant disability is far greater than is justifiable. The element of the unknown, even though it have nothing formidable in its nature, admits fear, and then *panic* is never far away. In such conditions the re-educational resources at our command are many and in the degree to which the patient is intellectually able to be made to understand himself,

his restoration to his former and often a greater degree of efficiency is proportionate.

Here, too, there may be need of much patience, for the man to whom high finance or abstruse chemical problems are as child's play, is not necessarily keen in the matter of understanding that he may have been the victim of his own emotions. Or that, with the correction of his digestion, or of some heedlessness in the matter of his daily habits of living, he should and may become able to recognize how to become master of his subconscious sensations. But such instruction may not be likely to interest the mathematician or the man with a "big deal" on his hands—and he may at times need to be brought quite close to actual shipwreck before he can be induced to call a halt, and devote some of his time and thought to the still more vital subject of a knowledge of himself.

CHAPTER XVII

APPLICATION OF SUGGESTION

The foregoing chapters have been an attempt to point out the dual factors that exist in the distresses of the chronic invalid and in the Variant, who are victims of functional disorders. It has been shown that such patients are hampered in their bodily functions and that such interference with the smooth working of the body mechanism must inevitably give rise to secondary disturbances, manifesting themselves in emotional and mental irregularities.

We have seen how invariably the patient becomes confused and unable to differentiate between the symptoms of cause and effect, and how easily the latter may, in his mind, assume a casual significance. It has been explained that, in the presence of such confusion as to the nature of his troubles, the first need lies in helping the patient to lay hold upon the various tangled threads that comprise the symptom-complex and follow them to their source. Such elucidation can not fail gradually to appeal to the understanding and clear the mind, so that a saner and happier horizon prevails. The reason has been appealed to and enlisted, and this is naturally man's most potent adjunct

in living his life in a way that is to his greatest advantage.

The writer has striven to show that there is a continuous interaction between mind and body and that any attempt at self-interpretation would fail that did not take this fundamental law constantly into account. Stress has been laid upon the dependence of the organism; first upon its physical self—since that is what a human being is before he is anything else—but that on top of this physical there is engrafted a consciousness; and whereas either may suffer alone for a time, eventually both must become involved. Further, that the consciousness has attached to it a spiritual factor, the soul side, and that unless this, too, is reckoned with, no human being is living a complete life, enjoying a perfect equipoise, or coming into the fulness of the possibilities of his existence.

The road leading to the amelioration of our distresses through the channel of our reasoning powers is naturally the one pursued by all seekers after truth and should be open to us all. But this broad avenue of knowledge has many byways converging upon it and one of these has only been slightly alluded to. This deals with that other resource nature has placed at our disposal in giving us the ability to approach the subconsciousness of an individual more directly than through the usual roundabout methods of his consciousness, and to make direct modifications upon it. "Suggestion," "Hypnoidal Suggestion" and "Hypnotic Suggestion," are various terms appearing often in

therapeutic literature, and are best interpreted under the term first mentioned, which may be dealt with as Therapeutic Suggestion. The subject has been abundantly written upon and has passed through many phases of discussion, use, over-use, and disuse. Like all other subjects belonging to the department of medical science it has passed through the period of dawn, excessive exploitation and partial eclipse, and again, as is the destiny of all truth we happen to lay hold upon fragmentarily, whatever is really true therein will settle into its rightful place and permanently form a part of the structure of the knowledge of our kind.

Much literature is extant upon the phenomena of suggestion and a large part of it relates to abstract psychology. Much also, one must admit, infringes upon the domain of the mystical and the speculative, with which we need have nothing to do. But with the remainder, which we can practically apply in our endeavors to relieve human suffering and to lift up the spirit and courage of man, we should have much to do. It should be as inexcusable in the real physician of today to ignore the phenomena and possibilities of suggestion in the treatment of the sick, as it would be were the surgeon of today to ignore the plain but momentous teaching of the principle of antisepsis. The latter is but of yesterday but the phenomena of suggestion are recognizable as going far back into human history and have always formed a part—though elusive and ill-understood—of the relation man

has held to man. Because the manifestations of this principle have been subtle and elusive it has been approached and retreated from, but since a great truth is involved it can no more be ignored than any other natural law.

It is not purposed to enter into any lengthy discussion of the principles of suggestion, this having been ably and exhaustively done long since, but rather to comply with what would be an unfulfilled duty towards one's profession, were not this all-important subject given the recognition it deserves. Stated in simplest terms the application of suggestion in the treatment of the sick is based upon the principle that all people are capable of receiving it. The subconsciousness, that instinctive self to which frequent reference has been made, is the self into which the infant is born. It is the self which remains throughout life, acts for us whether we wake or sleep, carries us through illness or delirium, attends to all of the innumerable functions of nutrition, reproduction and elimination and, no matter how we may otherwise be engaged with our consciousness, is always at its task from beginning to end.

If we cut our finger so that it bleeds, it is the provision resident within the subconsciousness which causes the blood to coagulate and the wound to heal. If we have eaten, not wisely but too well, it is the provision resident within the domain of the subconscious that may cause the stomach to rid itself of its contents. If the body has become invaded with the

hosts of an offending and deadly bacillus, it is the provision resident within our subconscious or vegetative self which summons all its resources for the development of an anti-substance wherewith to overcome the intruders. Over all these and many other functions of the body man has no control with his consciousness; they are providentially and for his safety, quite beyond his powers of interference.

The consciousness, the objective self or mind, is our reasoning self. It is that part of us which has been developed upon the subconscious and to a certain degree is capable of directing and influencing it. Through the will, the consciousness governs all our voluntary actions, from taking a simple walk across the room to diving to the bottom of a lake to rescue a drowning person, or going into the cannon's mouth for a principle, even though the knees tremble and there is great fear. The powers of reflection and inductive reasoning lie with the objective mind. Deduction, however, the subconsciousness can do perfectly, even though the objective self be asleep. Though each has its special functions in carrying on the business of the whole, yet normally they act in perfect harmony and coordination.

It is owing to our knowledge of the peculiar functions of the subconsciousness, wherein it shows itself singularly sensitive to receiving impression from without, that the science of Suggestive Therapeutics has come into existence. The subconsciousness is capable of receiving and carrying out impressions without their

needing always to go through the portals of the conscious mind. Indeed if we carefully observe our own actions and experiences during any one day, we will find it filled with interesting illustrations of the workings of the two consciousnesses, separately and in co-ordination. We can not fail to be impressed with the duality of the whole, or to see how certain actions are purely of the mind and others as purely of the instinctive and subconscious self, in which the mind has no part. The entire symptomatology of functional disorders is a mixture of physical and psychical phenomena, the one or the other being alternately in evidence.

We are all ready to admit, even the laity, that one is rarely ill in his body alone but that the mind is likely to participate. The recently developed branch of psycho-therapeutics known as psycho-analysis, devotes itself to unraveling as one would a tangled skein of yarn, by a process of careful searching and analysis, the snarl of symptoms and causes, the experiences and impressions stowed away in the patient's subconscious mind.

Ordinarily, full of the feeling that we can help the patient greatly by explaining him to himself, and pointing out the relations between his physical and his mental, we labor earnestly at trying to convince him by explanation and argument; but in order that such measures shall succeed, they must sink in upon the subconsciousness and that is often a slow and trying process since the *consciousness* intervenes and

must first be appeased. Doubtless, often when we have succeeded, it will be because we have effected a direct subconscious entrance without our knowing it. But whether we deliberately intend it or not, there are no instances whatever wherein there are not always impinging upon the patient, from the physician, suggestion after suggestion. Indeed it is inconceivable how it can be otherwise.

Since this fact is incontrovertible, in consequence there have developed a variety of well-recognized methods whereby suggestion is deliberately employed, with the patient's full understanding and consent. One of these methods is known as Hypnotic Suggestion, wherein the patient succeeds in becoming lulled into a state in many respects resembling sleep, wherein his subconsciousness is always perfectly conscious of what is being said to him. The hypnotic state is an exceedingly varied one, and ranges from a deep unconscious sleep through a number of stages and phases up to an apparent entire consciousness. It is a condition, in its deeper phases, to which only certain individuals are susceptible, though capable of being further developed through practice in any one. Its interest and usefulness lies in the fact that, whenever this state can be successfully induced and the patient's needs are of such nature as to be responsive to suggestion, we have the ideal conditions established for a direct and immediate access to his subconsciousness, with the expectation of the most brilliant therapeutic results.

This condition, still generally misunderstood by the

laity, is a perfectly natural and harmless one and is purely physiological. In everyday life many instances occur, as in sleep-walking and sleep-talking so frequent in children, and oftentimes persisting in the adult. It is a condition into which certain individuals with a peculiarly sensitive make-up, fall easily, and there are those who can cultivate it successfully in themselves. A child, when asleep, can easily be half aroused so that it is in a state of great hypnotic receptivity and in such cases may be given suggestion with the greatest success. In a typical state of hypnosis the patient's consciousness is entirely suspended and the suggestions made to him are not remembered, save that they are more or less successfully carried out because they are impressed upon the subconsciousness. All sorts of intermediary stages occur which have received various classifications, although such must remain in large measure arbitrary. Anyone, familiar through experience, with the practice of hypnosis, will be obliged to recognize the various stages to be almost as varied as are the subjects.

Hypnoidal Suggestion is a term recently employed in this country, to designate suggestion given to a person when he is in the hypnoidal state, i.e., a state resembling in a measure, that of hypnosis. It is probable that this latter state is one formerly frequently mistaken for hypnosis and it is the state most people enter into when subjected to attempted hypnosis. It is simply a condition of calmness and serenity wherein the individual is largely aware of everything going on

around him and wherein his consciousness remains awake. During the process of suggestion in this state, the individual may frequently dip lower down into his subconsciousness, emerging from one direction and dipping into another, but the entire condition resembling a state of pleasant lethargy, from which the patient at any moment can arouse himself into complete wakefulness.

Into this hypnoidal state practically every person can easily be helped, as he can also help himself, and many forms of suggestion may be given to him with great success. Such phenomena as occur with actual hypnosis do not occur nor does this matter, since the majority of patients can be most effectively benefited by this simple procedure. Many patients can be taught to lie down and by auto-suggestion induce first a state of tranquillity and lethargy, whereupon they can make to themselves many helpful other suggestions enabling them to obtain poise, courage and comfort.

Direct Suggestion is that employed by every physician when he gives a patient a positive assurance that he will get well. No attempt is made to induce any specially receptive condition in the patient. Any form of positive encouragement, based upon knowledge and good judgment, is a direct suggestion. A patient may be seated in a chair and told by the physician that he is about to give him a suggestion. Such suggestion consists merely of positive statements directed to him, that he will get well or do this or the other more com-

fortably and happily. It is truly astonishing how often such methods are helpful. But upon closer analysis the results thus obtained are simple enough, since man is first and last a suggestible being and there are a thousand ways wherein his subconsciousness will greedily absorb what is directed towards it.

Since then we have in suggestion a great ever-present force, working all the time with us all, penetrating upon our subconsciousness through all the channels of our various senses, whether we know it or not, is it not strange that we do not always bear its continuous modifying influence in mind? The temptation is great to illustrate some of the momentary and hourly ways wherein we are always being influenced by suggestion. Every thoughtful person, his attention once aroused, will become able to observe that he himself is the constant subject of suggestion. It may come to him through outward causes such as his contact with other people. It may come to him from reading the printed thoughts of others and through any of his daily acts. It may come through the impulses originating within his own organism, impelling him to take a drink of water, partake of food, to go to sleep or to awake from sleep. So many of these suggestive impulses take place quite beneath the plane of his consciousness—he does them automatically. Indeed these unconscious automatisms constitute the great bulk of all his actions. Only now and then is a man moved to act through the impulse of pure reason—this latter being the unusual with him

But he can deliberately reason with himself and then apply to himself the suggestion suggested as the result of his reasoning, and this with a success beyond the expectation of those not specially familiar with the application of the principle. The author's experience in this direction is extensive and he can recall hundreds of patients, suffering with various ills of a functional character who had also acquired a liberal admixture of psychical distresses, whose lives have been made happy and useful through the fearless use of suggestion, given in whatever form the patient's condition would accept. Many of these have been taught self or auto-suggestion and some of them continue to the present time regularly to take themselves in hand and successfully treat themselves for hope and courage and freedom from discomfort.

When we have employed all ways wherein help may be brought to the man or woman suffering with physical ills and the worldly backache, when all the resources of medicine and hygiene have been enlisted as aids, the greatest resource, reinforcing all the rest, lies in that universally applicable and broadly educative one, embodied in the wise application of the principle of *Suggestion*.

CHAPTER XVIII

APPLICATION OF SUGGESTION

(Continued)

It is a question which may legitimately be raised, whether we always need to lead every patient through the mazes of a psychological analysis of his disorder, though the close scrutiny and dissection of such problems is of the keenest scientific satisfaction and is an absolute essential to the acquisition of exact knowledge. But to the general practitioner, to whom this little book is particularly addressed, intricate analyses of any kind must be relegated to the laboratory, since those are necessarily only possible to those who have devoted themselves to exclusive specialization. The results of such specialized labors, reduced to certain more or less definite propositions, become then the property of all.

It is a desirable thing, so far as practicable, to give our patients all the analytic psychology we can that is involved with their disorder, to treat them with medicine and hygiene and ceaselessly to point out the further need of not permitting their subjective sensations to distort their moral poise and balance. These processes often require much time but they are the

bulwarks of the process of getting well. But there is resident within human beings a force so powerful, so wonderful, so infinitely old, as to antedate everything but the existence of the race itself—and this is its susceptibility for taking Suggestion,—conveyed to the patient in any way in which we may be able to make it find entrance upon the subconsciousness.

One look of assurance or distrust will convey more meaning than a thousand words, and may be capable of putting them all to naught. There is a quick telegraphy impinging upon the human consciousness, that will flash from one human being to another with a speed that sets aside all the circuitous bypaths of cumbersome words and detail. There is, in short, a direct road to the subconsciousness, reached through the channel of suggestion, which may be likened to the cutting of the Gordian knot as compared with unraveling it.

Before going further, however, upon this subject, the writer would stop to observe, even though he feels that it should be quite unnecessary, that he is in no sense to be understood as implying the existence of any so-called “occult” or other mysterious force as entering into the phenomena of suggestion in any form! All seekers after truth are busily engaged in dealing with the elucidation of *natural* laws, there being no others, which are all mysterious until we understand them, and this applies in like manner to the phenomena of Suggestion, hypnotic or otherwise. Dealing with the principles of suggestion and applying them, is

as possible and practicable as dealing with the principles of chemistry or astronomy, given that the individual has the bent of mind, the natural equipment, the zeal and love for the subject, which must be present to qualify for success in any study. These qualifications being assumed, all doors are open.

In order successfully to use suggestion in the physician's equipment against human suffering, he should first acquaint himself with the existence of suggestibility within himself, as in all other people. He needs to have used his power of observation in the recognition of the singular ease with which we all fall under the spell of this subtle force. He will quickly recall the blanched face at the suggestion of fear, the flushed countenance of shame, the turgid or swollen features of anger. He will remember the paralysis of hunger and digestion upon the receipt of evil tidings, the wonderful uplift and expansion of the spirit upon the influx of joy and hope, whereas "hope deferred maketh the heart sick!" His hopeful manner and tones lift his patient to the level whereon his medicines may prevail, while his solemn face and gravely shaken head may pull the props out from beneath him who might otherwise get well.

Everyone knows all these things and many more. Everyone will admit them in the abstract; everyone who has to do with the sick body or sicker soul, should also apply them, from the doctor down through all others who minister to its need. The secret of the influence of the unscrupulous quack and charlatan

upon the ignorant and suffering, is his knowledge of human nature and though he knows nothing about medicine or disease and his unscrupulousness is after all only bounded by his love of gain, if he be not wholly criminal, his words of encouragement may carry further than his drugs do harm.

A straight road leads to the citadel of the centre of our being, and along this it is our privilege to travel to the aid of many a needy soul. What it is that then takes place the writer does not presume to know. Here we get upon ground that is not yet explored by the analysis of the laboratory. Since the psychologist is able to show by means of cleverly devised instruments, that such subtle forces as the emotions can be made to register themselves in strongly characterized tracings; that joy or fear presented to the subject can write their own autograph in black and white, sending the blood bounding through the vessels or sinking in paralyzed retreat to the deeper cavities of the body, surely there is enough indisputable evidence to justify a thoughtful halt and the recognition that the mind does act upon the body. If the mind is admitted as acting upon the body in the control of the circulation, then we have a starting point for many other possible phenomena.

To put into words what appears to take place, when sometimes a few positive suggestions permit a patient who has been lame to walk, it may be said that some sort of an *inhibition* has been lifted, and that the power to use the muscles has thus been released. It is not meant to say that the muscles, thus released,

could have had any organic lesion. That implies destruction or impairment of tissue in nerve or muscle, or both, and we are not discussing organic involvements. We are discussing impaired courage and depressed or despondent spirits, impaired secretory functioning, impaired innervation. To this category belong not only the neurasthenics, the psychasthenics, the neurotics and hysterics but also everybody else, since whether we be well or ill, always are we subject to the influence of the mind upon the body.

In the writer's experience of some thirty years with the disorders of the neurotic and the neurasthenic, he feels that the entire subject of treatment would be minus its most important adjunct could he not avail himself of the resources of suggestion in whatever form it might prove applicable. The immense impressionability of the subconsciousness should occupy the first place in the mind of the physician. The patient brings with him a subconsciousness which may be likened unto a photographic plate which is bound to become light-struck always and it depends upon us as to what the nature of such light shall be—*what* shall have its image reflected upon the plate.

We are too prone to handle the patient without regard to his extreme sensitiveness to impressions, increased many fold over the ordinary because the man is sick. When the patient with phobias or exaggerated consciousness of his vegetative processes consults the doctor, his predispositions are all in the direction of an eager hypersensitiveness towards impressions of one

kind only—and these helpful and encouraging ones. Even though the patient is pessimistic, depressed or hypochondriacal, even though he meets every encouraging advance of the physician with a score of discouraging expressions of doubt or disbelief, he nevertheless cherishes in his heart an eagerness for reassurance. The hypochondriac, full of disclaimers of any further vestiges of virtue within him, perceives out of the corners of his subconscious eye every shade of manner and expression and hoards them for future rumination.

Here is where the manner of the physician counts for so much and the writer is convinced, from his own experiences, that the first consultation over a frightened, discouraged and hopeless patient is of more importance than any subsequent ones. Though it may seem that after such first interview no actual steps had yet been taken for the amelioration of the patient's distresses, the most important process in the well-getting of the future has really been begun, if in the mind and heart of the despondent there shall have been awakened hope!

The perceptive doctor can put himself in the patient's place to some degree—can interpret his symptoms for him infinitely better than he can himself, can put them into concrete words, and the patient is caused to feel that the obscure trouble is understood. To this end it goes without saying that the physician shall have an imagination and trained perceptive faculties and, better still, have been himself not wholly

without personal experience in a general manner like unto those who come to him for help.

The doctor may have confined himself only to discussing the hopeful outlook of the disorder and pointed out that in human experience such disorders usually tend to get well—to become corrected—if proper measures are taken. But something else will also have taken place in the man's mind,—and the complex processes wherein the spirit is uplifted should have been released in lifting the embargo of fear and helplessness.

The late distinguished Dr. Pepper well recognized this principle when he said that no physician was justified in telling his patient that his case was hopeless, unless the just rights and interests of others were involved. It might appear to all human judgment that there was not more than one chance in a thousand for the patient, but that no human being could tell with absolute positiveness that the patient would die, and that if there should happen to be present one lingering chance for recovery, this forlorn hope would inevitably be lost! Here was a recognition of a great principle—that of the influence of the mind, of the emotions, upon life and death.

In the use of suggestion of any kind, if it be intended that it shall be given with the conscious cooperation of the patient, the latter needs to be given an understanding, in as simple terms as may be, of the general principles involved. There should be explained to him the fact that the subconsciousness is somehow at fault in

the development and perpetuation of some of his distresses and that it can often be reached by direct impressions being made upon it. That such impressions may be in the form of direct statements addressed thereto and that if the patient can be caused to become to some degree tranquillized and even more or less hypnotized, the entrance to the subconsciousness will be greatly facilitated.

Should the patient fail to understand how statements declaring him to be free from pain or distress of mind or aggravated fears can be true, when he is obviously suffering from any or all of these things, it should be painstakingly explained that there is no question whatever as to the genuineness of his distresses, but that, by virtue of the very principles involved in the psychology of suggestion, an undesirable sensation, particularly a morbid or pathological one, *can* be displaced by the normal, which always has the right of way.

Successful results follow in an exceedingly large number of instances wherein the physician, after careful elimination and selection, feels certain of the suitability of the case. The results in such instances never cease to be startling, alike to physician and patient. A lady recently in the care of the author will illustrate an instance. For three months she had been unable to walk save with a staggering gait and after a few moments would be likely to collapse and sink to the floor. She had clearly defined digestive disorders and was likewise suffering with marked emotional

instability. For fifty years she had been a perfectly strong and well woman and had been equal to many miles a day across hill and dale. There were no indications of hysteria and she was a woman of sound intelligence. Naturally a state of terrorism had been evolved and her actual ability was not indexed by her symptoms since these latter had taken possession of the field and were paramount. The first suggestion, given in a moderate hypnoidal state, gave her confidence that she could walk, which she promptly tried with noticeable improvement. After three or four suggestions distributed over a period of a week she could walk a mile without undue fatigue and after a month, with the suggestions continued, she was rid of her troubles and had developed a normal degree of emotional stability.

In this instance the writer can say only, that as the result of the reassuring and encouraging suggestion the inhibition was lifted. Just how this took place we may not be able to explain—but it *did* take place!

Inhibitions upon our courage, our confidence, our hope and our abilities occur in millions of instances and multitudinous forms. The writer feels justified in asserting that these can always be lifted if they are functional. The instances wherein men of intellectual occupations lose their courage and confidence, and become frightened and full of distrust and often despair—these conditions being usually attended by disturbances of sleep, digestion, and elimination,—are innumerable. Most of such patients can readily grasp

the simple principles of therapeutic suggestion and easily lend a willing ear and cooperation to an intelligently presented method of relief. They can invariably get such relief, sometimes speedily and at others after a longer interval and they can be taught to help themselves much more successfully in the future. The less intelligent patient may not and need not be expected to enter into an understanding of the principles of the technique of suggestion, but if he has confidence in his doctor will gladly yield himself unquestioningly, and with such patients the results are wonderfully frequent and satisfactory.

A visit made by the writer to the communal hospital of Bernheim at Nancy a few years ago, revealed the results that could be obtained with the peasantry and common people. These patients entered the hospital for treatment with the expectation of being helped and the atmosphere of the institution was in itself charged with suggestion. The sight by a number of waiting patients, of another being relieved of his trouble, was in itself a suggestive force of unparalleled helpfulness. It was the author's privilege to accompany this Father of Therapeutic Suggestion upon his rounds through the wards of the hospital and to witness the results of suggestion upon some scores of patients who, through his assistants, had been selected as suitable cases. Some patients were in bed, suffering with long-standing illnesses, to whom suggestion was given for the release of their inhibited courage and recuperative powers. Others were walking about and

recovering assurance, waiting for the occasional approving word or further suggestion from the master, and new ones were brought in and submitted to Dr. Bernheim for the first time.

Here were cases of neuralgia; of rheumatic affections; of various neuroses such as somnambulism, chorea, writer's cramp, incontinence; of motor pareses; of gastro-intestinal affections; of menstrual troubles; of aphonia, insomnia, muscle pains of various kinds and other neurotic and neuropathic affections; a choice collection of hysterical disorders; and also of nervous sequelae that were the accompaniments of such organic diseases as paresis, sclerosis and hemiplegia.

In these varied conditions relief, frequently cure, was being obtained for the majority. Nor is it to be understood that the writer means to imply that the common people or the uneducated furnish any better material for suggestive therapeutics than is found amongst the educated. It is only the half-educated who are the tardy ones in responding to therapeutic suggestion. The uneducated are easily reached because they have not developed that "little knowledge which is a dangerous thing," and they lend themselves easily and trustingly, while the trained and educated mind is a joy with which to work since it can lend itself so wholly and cooperate so perfectly.

The recent work of Emile Coué is but a verification and accentuation of what the writer has sought to make clear in this book. Coué brings to us the experiences of a mind acutely trained in certain channels of

psychological perception and the writer would wholly agree with him that auto-suggestion—the conveying of a suggestion to himself by the individual himself—is the necessary, the final act whereby the suggestion is carried home—and all of the preliminary things said and done by the outside individual are but stages of preparation to make the end sought more possible.

Spectacular results such as the abandonment of crutches—or the lifting of pseudo-paralyses—do happen—and the author has still a vivid recollection of one of his earlier cases wherein a noted naturalist who had been upon crutches altogether for a number of years, walked half a mile after his first suggestion and after the third left them permanently behind, and within two weeks was walking ten miles a day in the woods in pursuit of his interests.

In exposition of Coué it seems desirable to repeat that such immediate results do not always obtain—they are the infrequent ones though the most objective—and the great majority of patients who are helped or cured by suggestion obtain their relief only as the result of a persistent training, and such training must have the factor of time. It may not reasonably be expected that chronic disorders which often have been present for years or the larger part of a lifetime—which often become an established and automatic routine with the organism—should be replaced by normal functioning as the result of a few suggestions only. Here again it is but rational to assume the necessity of re-training,—the excavation of new

grooves of normal habit, of the gradual replacement of the abnormal by the normal.

The writer wholly agrees with Baudouin that Coué has given the psychologist the best practical solution of the hitherto but obscurely understood problem of the conflict between the will and the imagination, and furnished a working basis that seems capable of obtaining definite practical results,—of arriving at the end sought,—namely, the relief of the patient's distresses.

CHAPTER XIX

THE RELEASE OF INHIBITIONS

So many disorders confront the physician wherein he does not feel clear as to the relative rôle played by actual organic or mere functional impairment of tissue, gland or nerve cells, and the equally uncertain and more unknown factor represented by an impaired cerebral spontaneity! No one can always honestly presume to draw the line between the physical that may be obvious, that which is still physical though not obvious, and the ever-present psychical which is a quantity quite without known dimensions. For this reason we should always take the possibility of the presence of the latter into consideration and give the patient the benefit of its recognition and treatment.

In the same manner that we expect to bring relief with the administration of medicine, electricity, massage, water, heat or light-therapy—and other familiar measures, namely, by influencing functioning activity, so also are we at times capable of influencing function through the channels of the higher cerebral centres by the use of suggestion. The latter may be capable of reinforcing all of the above-mentioned measures and, at times, supplanting them entirely.

In organic disease we have a nucleus of permanently impaired function because of permanently destroyed tissue. But attending such permanent impairment we also have a varying zone of impairment that is not the result of destruction but of inhibition—an inhibition which, if not released, may easily pass, in its turn, to degeneracy. Noticeably has the writer seen this in some cases of hemiplegia and tabes wherein, in the former, a considerable degree of the paralysis has been promptly lifted by suggestion, and in the latter all pain become effaced and the patient enabled to resume in consequence a larger degree of activity.

There are many instances in which, after the cause of a disease or disorder has disappeared, the effects or secondary disturbances may remain wholly or in part behind, and these may persist indefinitely owing to conditions we do not understand. Yet suggestion is capable of dispersing such laming, stunning or benumbing residua in a most remarkable manner. We have striking instances in the case of men who break down as the result of over-strain and neglect, in the arduous conditions of business or the professions, or after severe illness. Here the individual seems to react to a degree from the first severe effects of his illness, and then may linger on for months and years with only a partial recovery, never again wholly able to reinstate himself in his former degree of usefulness and happiness.

The so-called “nervous prostrations” furnish thousands of illustrations of such instances. There would

appear to linger upon the mind the *memory* of *defeat*, and so long as this persists the individual can not again occupy the centre of his consciousness with his proper business of life. It is imperative that an attempt should be made to efface from the sub-consciousness this memory of disaster, since otherwise life may never resume the fulness of its possibilities, which will always remain latent. Such instances occur constantly in daily life and may frequently be seen in some cases of business failure. There are men to whom one defeat will be final, and others, who experience it any number of times, and as many times succeed in rallying themselves and again making good. We say of such individuals who continue to rise to the surface and swim, no matter how many times they may have been submerged, that "he does not know defeat!" Such men are fortunate indeed because they are so constituted that they are able to forget—there remains with them no psychological inhibition and they rebound and renew the attack indefinitely, and consequently eventually overcome all obstacles to final success.

The owner of a young dog is careful that at too early an age he does not suffer a too great punishment through the superior strength and prowess of another dog, lest his spirit be broken and his courage destroyed. Here it is merely that the puppy, having no store of other memories wherein he has at times been victorious, succumbs simply to the one overpowering impression produced by his defeat and cannot forget it.

With a boy who has for the first time experienced a great disaster with a boat, or any other sport wherein his judgment and experience were immature, it is quite imperative that he should try again speedily, lest the memory of his signal defeat assume greater and greater proportions, to the subsequent exclusion and suppression of any further spirit of venturesomeness and courage.

A lady, for seven years bereaved of her husband, had during all this time remained in a condition of mental shock. She had no interest in her children, none in any of the ordinary interests of life, she lived in a state of mental and spiritual stasis as though all human interests had gone from her with the loss of her husband. Her appearance was that of a person who had been stunned as though from a physical blow and her interest in the life about her was that of a person only half awake and half alive. Within one month this lady, as the result of suggestion directed forcefully towards the liberation of all her old interests in life—towards the renewing of her relations with her children, her family, her friends and home,—became absolutely restored, as one would be when aroused to waking life after a profound trance. All other things but suggestion had been tried.

A business man, suffering with profound gastrointestinal autointoxication, had been ill for six months with symptoms of agitated excitement and severe depression. The splendid mind, capable of broad administrative responsibilities, seemed to crumble down

into a feeble mockery of itself. The physical symptoms of the illness had disappeared but the patient remained in a shattered state, had lost all confidence in himself and talked, at times, of self-destruction. The field of medicine had been exhausted, the patient apparently had reached the end of his resources. Suggestion, given over a period of several months, insistently pouring into his mind the idea of recovery and courage and usefulness, lifted from him the pall of cerebral or psychic inertia and gave him back to himself and his friends, a splendidly well man. This man was to a most obvious degree suffering with the stunning or paralyzing effects produced by his illness upon the brain. There was no knowing how long this might have continued. The disease had passed, the digestion, with its various functions, had been restored as evidenced by all physiological tests, yet the patient was more of a sufferer than during the first active stages of his illness. His mental suffering was augmented by very reason of his restored physical powers which, though so obviously present, made the contrast with his lame will and courage the keener.

By means of this agency we come in close relation with that elusive and unknown quantity, resident in the human being which, for want of a better term, we may call the *vital factor*. It is that something which the biologist encounters when, beginning with the gelatinous ooze at the bottom of the seas and tracing from it ever ascending forms of structure, he arrives at its supreme expression in man, yet finds himself

mystified in the presence of the thing we call Life. By acting upon this mysterious quantity through word and manner, or by means of whatever method we may have the skill or the gift or the inspiration to employ, through the medium of the consciousness, we are living up to the greatest light that shines within us upon the mazes of the devious paths of human knowledge.

It would appear that suggestion releases a dynamogenic force within the nervous system, enabling the inhibition or stasis of function to become displaced. In the case of a swollen rheumatic joint, rendered immobile by pain, suggestion may give immediate relief from the latter. We well know that pain is a sovereign disturber of function. Through its inflow upon the brain and the consciousness, disturbing efferent impulses flow forth to the part involved and function becomes at once impaired. The moment that pain is no longer perceived by the consciousness, that moment the outflowing impulses to the part involved cease to disturb, and physiology will take the place of pathology to that degree that the remaining integrity of the cells makes possible. The writer has seen a swollen rheumatic knee go down several inches in circumference within a few hours after the use of suggestion, and locomotion become instantly easier. It is in the higher field of the psychic neuroses, however, that its use would appear to be of the utmost importance. It is a veritable dynamic force for widespread application, reinforcing all other agencies and occupying also a place peculiarly its own.

Let us consider for a moment the phenomena attending a case wherein the patient is given to walking in his sleep. Have we any drugs which we would rationally employ in the cure of this disorder? Or would any amount of argument enable the patient, who is already distressed and unhappy with his infirmity, to desist? Some faulty relation prevails within his consciousness, wherein the automatic side of it is set into action, without the control of his higher self, and the individual commits acts of which he has no knowledge. If we can succeed in getting into direct relation with the subconsciousness, either through some degree of induced hypnosis or by approaching him whilst in ordinary sleep, we can administer a complete remedy by word of mouth. One suggestive treatment, consisting of any one of innumerable forms of speech that we may elect to employ, may be capable of completely reestablishing a condition of perfect order and the sleep walking ceases.

Sometimes suggestion does not meet with immediate response and will need longer repetition, but this is as true of all other known measures which we employ for relief. The matter of moment for our consideration is that suggestion *will* do this thing at all! Have we not then in this simple illustration the manifestation of a very wonderful principle? If only one such instance were on record, that would be a matter of much interest and probably remain as an isolated and puzzling phenomenon. But such instances occur

by the thousands and furthermore seem to extend as far back as we have any history.

In the case of incontinence in a child we may approach it in its sleep and, without awakening it say, in suitably chosen words of positive character, that it will no longer wet the bed at night, and in all instances where there is no local trouble, the incontinence will cease! In a case of the doubting-folly in a woman of middle life, who was unceasingly undecided as to whether she should or should not go to dinner or to church or down town or do any one of a hundred normal and ordinary things, medicine would hardly appear to be a remedy and much less so would be any attempt at discussion. The latter would only serve to emphasize the indecision by bringing it still more prominently before the consciousness. Suggestion, given this lady in a light degree of hypnosis, to the effect that she would always be able to decide instantly, that the state of indecision was no longer present, that all the haze of apparent paralysis of will was gone, that she would be enabled to act freely and spontaneously and rationally always from now on—was after a month followed by complete restitution to a happy and normal state of mind.

Moral perversions in children furnish a most fruitful field, likewise. A child becomes disobedient, runs away from school, is quarrelsome with other children and irritable with the parents; it becomes estranged from its former happy and obedient self and becomes moody and solitary or develops strange cruelties

towards others and towards animals. Numberless illustrations of such perversions might be given. A few suggestions given such a child, in hypnosis, are capable of quite subverting the existing disorder and restoring perfect obedience and happiness. The disorders may recur and will need to be treated again—but they become cured. Giving the child indirect suggestion by merely letting it alone and talking to the mother in the former's presence to the effect that it will no longer do this or that undesirable thing, but will love to obey and get its lessons and no longer practice cruelty to the cat or dogs, may also prove equally efficacious and is merely the employment of the same agent in an indirect manner.

A word more should be said here regarding the meaning of the term "hypnosis." It should not be understood as being a condition in itself, or implying the absence of the normal. Hypnosis is merely a state of body which is in itself the result of suggestion, and is desirable as a paver of the way for further suggestions to follow. In itself the condition means nothing since it is in all respects allied to sleep, though usually only a partial sleep, and may be so light that the individual is in no sense aware of sensations that differ from being fully awake, and wherein he perfectly follows the words of the speaker.

A state of hypnosis may be quite as effectively induced by the individual himself as by an outsider, and is merely a state of greater receptivity wherein the psychic centres are become more susceptible and

accessible to the curative suggestions that follow. In his own case one may suggest to himself sleepiness and repose and, if the surrounding conditions are favorable as regards freedom from disturbance, he will, sooner or later, experience a sense of calm and bodily lethargy which is exactly the same condition prevailing before he falls asleep at night. If in this state of mental and physical calm he will hold in his thought, insistently, one definite idea,—for instance the cessation of the pain in a tooth or neuralgic nerve, it is quite within the bounds of the usual that such pain will cease. If one desires to lift his spirit with hope and courage, to remove worry, anxiety or fear, to give himself a clean psychical “slate,” so to speak, he has but to make the appropriate suggestion and the result will often follow.

The marvellous nature and potency of the phenomena of suggestion are so close to us that, as with the air and the sunshine, we are mostly oblivious of their presence. We carry about with us in our own persons, as a part of our very life, the greatest potentials that exist toward mental and spiritual equilibrium and physical well-being. We do not even need to go out of our own chamber to have set free within us a very fountain of vitality and happiness.

It is quite true that when we happen to be lame we cannot walk or run, and when we are under a cloud we may not be able even to think of or remember the sunshine, and that then we assuredly should lay hold of the help that may come to us from without. But

is it necessary that we should forever go on neglecting the mending of our roofs until it rains and we are reminded again that they leak, when, because it is then raining we cannot mend them? May we not learn that we can develop these resources within ourselves during fair weather, so that when the area of depression comes, we shall have developed something in the way of clarity of mental and spiritual horizon to which we may hold fast? In his many years of experience with suggestion the writer still continues to be surprised at the extraordinary range and simplicity of the way in which curative or helpful results are obtained.

When it is continually being demonstrated that we need only to approach a patient who is suffering with insomnia and, after having established a few conditions in the way of explanation and confidence, state to him emphatically that he shall sleep—and find that in many instances he will—surely that approaches near to being a phenomenon of great moment. Neither the above nor any other of the therapeutic results obtained by suggestion always follow. Sometimes results are most bafflingly deferred—or even not forthcoming at all—but so are they likewise in consequence of all other means within our knowledge. The writer, in the use of suggestive therapeutics, has had his share of failures, as he has likewise had them together with other physicians, in the use of all other therapeutic measures. But by all means has he found that suggestion, intelligently employed, either alone

or, as is more often the case, as an adjunct to whatever other measures might be employed, is of an importance overlapping everything else.

Somehow the straight and direct approach to the receptive consciousness of a man, with the positive statement of health, of normal functioning, of the restitution of his integrity of mind and body, and the almost inevitable helpful result, is a surpassing phenomenon and one that never ceases to be awe-inspiring. It does not appear that we need to dissect our patient's morbid psychology down to its histological elements in order to be of help. We may do so if it interests us, and, of course, we do need to know our histology. But before we had a cellular pathology we had the human mind to work with and upon, and the human soul to reckon with as a factor that would not be ignored—even while the psychological microscope was being prepared.

The human consciousness is a development upon man's physical and animal self and the more it develops the more does it appear as though it meant to be included in all that concerns the soil in which it grows. Let us consider for a moment the following phenomena, often occurring in various forms and quite easily reproduced. An elderly man, living under somewhat primitive and meager conditions, in a mountain camp in a southwestern territory, was given at night three pills containing each two and one-half grains of Dovers powder, for an annoying bronchial cough. It had not occurred to the writer to mention the seemingly

obvious reason for administering the drug. The following morning the patient announced that "the pills had physicked him severely!" In his limited experience "pills" had only one significance and therefore the result corresponded with the expectant set of the subconsciousness. Another man, living under more favorable environment and conversant with the expectant effect of what he was about to take, proceeded to take three compound cathartic pills at bedtime, for which purpose he went into a dark pantry, taking them in a spoonful of apple sauce. The following morning the desired result was obtained but the pills were found at breakfast time reposing in the dish of apple sauce!

It is not necessary to refer to the once familiar placebo, affected by an earlier generation of medical men and in disrepute with later ones. The old-time placebo may have been justifiable if the clinical results obtained were satisfactory, but today we have the psychology of its administration better in hand and we may approach our patient and treat him fearlessly through its interpretation, and that often with more intellectual and scientific justification than with which we still administer some medicines.

CHAPTER XX

THE RIGHT OF ALLEVIATION

Even in the administration of drugs we have abundant illustrations of the manner in which the subconsciousness of the individual is enlisted and therapeutic results obtained. Not by reason of what the drug may do directly at the seat of the disorder, but because of what it often does in restoring the normal activity of the subconscious switchboard, thereby permitting order and comfort once more to prevail in the remoter departments of the organism that were disturbed.

There has been abroad in the medical profession a strong wave of therapeutic nihilism, wherein much skepticism has been manifested towards the administration of drugs for the relief of bodily ailments, functional or organic. The inclination is strong to recognize as carefully as possible the character of the ailment, and in this respect our diagnostic training has made a marvelous growth, but the readiness to furnish relief along the more conventional lines of the prescribing of remedies has materially fallen off.

The physician, by reason of his more accurate understanding of the nature of many diseases, his greater grasp of the fact that the body, when disturbed by

inflammation, by the invasion of bacteria, by the presence of undue quantities of irritating or poisonous substances, ordinarily will rise to the occasion of the greater demand upon its recuperative and protective energies and make greater efforts towards resistance, feels confidence loom up much more reassuringly upon his mental horizon.

He knows now that many diseases are in their nature self-limited and that no sooner is the body invaded by the bacilli of diphtheria, pneumonia, or many other specific diseases, than it begins to rouse all its protective energies and manufacture as speedily as it can substances that eventually destroy the disease-producing organisms and prevent their further multiplication. There is even produced in some instances an excess of these protective substances in the blood which for varying periods of time will quite prevent the individual from falling prey to such particular diseases again. Indeed other individuals may be inoculated with such anti-toxines, taken from the blood of animals that have had one of these specific diseases, and they in their turn become immune against that special contagion.

It is because of our greater understanding of these facts that no attempt is now made to treat medicinally diseases that are known to be self-limited and wherein we recognize that nature must do the work herself. We are enabled to do more for the greater comfort of those who suffer with specific or contagious disorders. In some cases they are better fed in order that the

organisms may be aided to offer more resistance, and in others the great value of pure and cold air in unlimited quantities is recognized as a remedial agent of sovereign power.

It is not strange that, in the presence of these recently discovered facts, a certain revulsion of feeling concerning the efficiency of drugs should have arisen. Nor is it strange that this revulsion should have flowed over the margin, so to speak, and become excessive, since the tendency in therapeutics towards too great oscillation of the pendulum seems to be well recognized. It is unquestionably true that the innate tendency in nature is to recover from a disorder. It is also true that in many instances we do not know at all in what manner drugs act upon the organism, and the fact that in certain disorders so many different kinds of drugs seem at times efficacious, and that at other times none of them seem to produce any helpful effect whatever,—naturally casts a very justifiable uncertainty upon their administration and may incline to cause one to stay his hand, even upon the side of erring in doing too little.

The fact that such a disorder as hiccough, which though often so simple and transient a thing may yet at times assume graver aspects, has had no less than seventy different remedies prescribed for its relief, is a patent argument in favor of our helplessness regarding the administration of drugs under certain conditions. But this is one of the instances wherein we do not always know what is at fault—wherein the nature

of the disorder lies, and the same is true of many other functional disturbances. Doubtless in many instances, could we but know just what secretions or nerve-impulses were at fault, we might succeed in going much more directly to their aid.

Modern chemistry, however, is gradually working towards the production of what promise to be very fundamental bases from which we have the right to hope for most wonderful things. The uncertainties attending the administration of drugs, wherewith oftentimes such conflicting results have been obtained, promise to be scientifically accounted for, and the occasions wherein the physician has felt his use of remedies to be all too near empiricism promise eventually to grow far less frequent.

It has been due to these uncertainties, the unquestioned failures,—all because of the too frequent absence of *accurate* knowledge,—that the various so-called “Schools” of Medicine have arisen. There exist no schisms or factions in any department of actual knowledge; these are merely the advance guard, the fluctuations due to what at one time or another may seem to be true, all of which shall inevitably be succeeded by the same unanimity that prevails in such branches of knowledge as have become more nearly exact sciences.

It is not within the author’s domain to enter into a discussion of the action of drugs, other than as their use appears to have a significance that would often seem to be apart from that ordinarily attributed to

them. There are many instances wherein we do not treat the primary disorder from which the patient may be suffering. Sometimes, even when we know the causal disturbance, we find ourselves unable to reach it and are obliged to content ourselves by treating the resultant symptoms.

We know, for instance, that in the case of an acute inflammatory trouble of the intestines, attended by much pain, a very singular effect is obtained by the use of opium. It may be highly desirable to evacuate the bowels and rid them of the source of irritation, and yet the attending pain easily may be a symptom of such great significance as to demand first attention. We recognize that the effect of surgical shock produced by the perception of pain is a matter of the first moment, and that all efforts must be directed towards the curtailing of such perception. In administering opium we are therefore not treating the primary disorder, which is a local and inflammatory one, but the results of that disorder, which are the cumulative effects of pain upon the perceptive centers. After we have succeeded in breaking the circuit through which the pain perception is transmitted, and thus rested the central nervous system, we feel ourselves free to direct our attention towards the alleviation of the irritated condition of the bowels and to deplete the local congestion by evacuants. We have here a classical illustration wherein is recognized what would appear to be a most important thing, namely: the annulling of the perception of pain by the consciousness, in order that

the subconsciousness may be permitted in an unimpeded manner to attend to the processes of readjustment and restoration.

It is a common experience of the country physician, who of necessity sees his outlying patients only at long intervals, that he is often called upon to treat conditions that in their nature are complex, which would require a prolonged analysis and frequent attendance, before the exact character of the disorder and the necessary treatment could be clearly determined. One of the commonest attending symptoms, of course, is pain, and the physician is obliged to recognize that whatever be the disorder, the first demand upon him is likely to be the relief of pain.

The use of opiates in some of these cases might be justly questioned as not being therapeutically indicated. Nevertheless it often happens that following the administration of this drug the patient, even though other and more specific drugs be withheld or only imperfectly administered, much more speedily convalesces from a disorder which in itself may in no sense have indicated the administration of the opiate. We have here an unquestionable illustration of the fact that the consciousness, aroused and startled by the perception of pain, becomes a disturbing factor of great importance and materially interferes with the carrying on of those inherent physiological processes that are normally set free to meet what the emergency calls for. If the consciousness be thus lulled, we can readily see how much more easily the routine com-

pensatory and readjusting work done by the sub-consciousness, may be permitted to go on more freely.

In the large class of chronic disorders grouped under the head of neurasthenia we have many forms of pain, mostly sub-acute, but which have acquired a prominence making them a factor of no mean proportions in the consideration of the problem presented. The long continued perception of pain, be it even of a low type, produces a very positive cumulative effect upon the patient's consciousness. By its action the sense of proportion becomes impaired to a considerable degree since he is immersed in an actual atmosphere of discomfort which prevents his consciousness from holding itself aloof, thus inhibiting the sub-consciousness from acting normally. He is no longer able to distinguish boundary lines and is in a state of confusion, being himself often quite unable to give definite outlines to his trouble. It is extremely desirable in such cases to produce a marked impression of relief upon the consciousness of the sufferer, in other words to bring to bear such means as our experience has taught us will minimize or even cut off entirely the transmission of pain impulses to the sensorium. It amounts to a diversion of the attention of the consciousness, by throwing off the switch over which the perception of discomfort travels. Such switching off would appear to enable the sub-conscious or vegetative processes to resume their normal activities, and under such conditions we have the ideal state wherein physiological impulses can most effectively and promptly fulfill their

function in the readjustment of the circulatory and glandular disequilibrium.

We are familiar with the marvellous readjusting and recuperative changes which take place during the oblivion of sleep. Often a patient suffering from some minor disorder will say: "Let me once have a good night's sleep and I shall be all right again!" What have we here but a complete suspension of the interfering powers of the consciousness? A suspended consciousness permits the most ideal functioning of the organisms to take place. Interference is then at a minimum. Indeed could sleep but be prolonged into days instead of hours, there is no doubt that many a protracted convalescence would be promptly and favorably concluded!

In the administration of the bromides we are well aware of the resultant depletion of vascular fullness which takes place. Attending such depletion of the vessels we get a lessened pressure upon the surrounding tissues with their nerve terminations and therefore a lessened impression of pain upon the perceptive centres. In this resultant diminution of perception we have at least a partial forgetting, i.e., a dulling of the perceptive consciousness, permitting thereby again the more perfect functioning of the sub-consciousness, to the end that readjusting processes the more easily go on.

The relief attending the application of a mustard paste may not be wholly as the result of the determination of blood to the immediate site of the irritant,

at the expense of the pathological assembling of blood in the deeper tissues, but may in part be due to the distraction of the too-attentive consciousness, thereby permitting an easier, because non-interfered-with, functioning of the sub-consciousness towards physiological balance.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CLAMOR OF A NEED

Throughout the world today there are moving some wonderful psychological forces that are well worthy the grave consideration of those whose profession it is to heal. Great movements are abroad that appear to be establishing a foothold among all classes of people, wherein the underlying factor would seem to be one that concerns the recognition of certain forces within the human makeup that are other than physical. By the aid of these forces their disciples aspire to lift themselves to higher levels of bodily and spiritual health, to become more oblivious to suffering and to experience higher levels of mental and spiritual calm.

The different cults, for such they have become, fluctuate somewhat widely in their interpretations and beliefs, by no means drawing clear lines between the real and the unreal, and are often sadly confused as to any intelligent understanding of the nature of the things they profess and are dealing with. They appear at times to be ready to set at naught all the hard facts which human experience has so painfully accumulated throughout its long centuries, and to refute the actual existence of things that we have come to know as

natural laws. If in the course of the pursuit of these, their recently acquired beliefs, they happen to run counter to these laws, and the penalty of such violation is exacted, they often remain undaunted, merely assuming that in some way owing to their own imperfect understanding of their beliefs, they have failed in correctly carrying out the proper conditions and continue in their faith in the serene expectation of ultimate success.

If we have cursorily observed what befalls the disciples of these cults, we cannot fail to have noticed the occurrence of failures in consequence of the violations above mentioned, and may be led to turn away in impatience from any further attempt at understanding other and greater things involved, which always form the nucleus of world-wide movements of the people. Some of us may not have seen that by far the larger number of such disciples have become rather exceptionally happy and contented people and that many of them, who have been suffering from various chronic ailments, some of them being what we would call "real" and others "fancied," have succeeded either in getting well or forgetting them, or in *living above them!*

Nevertheless there is a growing number of our profession who are seeing with more prophetic vision and who are earnest, aye, reverent students of their significance. To such keen observers the lines that separate the margins of the stream of truth from the slack and muddy waters of these great movements are quite

clearly defined, and they are enabled to recognize that there is a very real and virile life abroad therein.

As the result of further inquiry we shall find that with all of these movements, they owe their life basically to the presence of a psychological factor. But in the contemplation of this newly recognized psychological law, with the oft-times wonderful flashes of new truths it may reveal they may easily be blinded to the existence of other factors that are certainly quite as real, such as organic and specific disease!

In the zealous pursuit of these, to them, new revelations of what is really everyday human psychology, and which unquestionably contains some of the most wonderful truths we know, it is quite astonishing through how many unexpected ways practical applications may be made which seem to redound in additions to their happiness.

It does not suffice that we permit the vast significance of such popular movements, whether they advance or retard the happiness of their followers, to pass us by without seriously trying to grasp their import, since whatever happens with the multitude happens with the individual; and because the individual, with all his complexities, physiological and psychological, comes to us for aid in the solution of his problems.

We see that a fundamental note of great power must have been struck, and one that comes very close to the heart of man, when we recognize, as we must, that the majority of these people are certainly much the *happier* for their beliefs! It may be urged that in

all likelihood the ailments of these people are probably only beliefs and that in consequence merely a belief of a different kind has been substituted. But we have instances wherein the attention of our profession has been called to individuals, suffering with actual organic or specific disease, who eventually succumbed thereto, who were actually buoyed up by the strength of their belief to the degree that they believed themselves well, and who attended to their affairs, almost up to the last hours preceding their, to them, unexpected demise!

It is at this juncture that our profession, as guardians of the public health, very justly takes notice of the jeopardy to human life that a misplaced belief may involve, and insists that such individuals shall be obliged, for their own protection and that of society, to yield themselves to the care of all the positive knowledge upon the subject that the experience of the medical profession has evolved. Such instances were formerly and are even now not rare among the followers of some of these cults, for when does any new light or new enthusiasm ever content itself with balance and moderation; and, indeed, does not much of our understanding come as the result of the mistakes made and the penalties paid for zeal without knowledge?

But looking behind all such obvious misapplications of whatever truth and principle may be the nucleus of these movements, there remains a large residuum of what appears to be an abiding good done, an actual increase in the happiness and welfare of a

great number of individuals. Some of these people have been in the care of the family physician for years, have faithfully submitted themselves to his instruction, have taken his medicines, pursued their occupations or remained in bed, traveled or resigned themselves to nurse or sanitarium, who have had everything from him in fact save the one thing they most needed—and this he apparently could not give, because he did not himself know what it was above all things else that they needed!

The answer to this, their one great need, has in some of the above instances come to the rescue of the sufferers from out of a sort of hostile camp—a following of enthusiasts, who took small notice of many adamantine facts on the painfully cultivated field of human experience, who rushed on like a resistless wave, carrying many hitherto obstinate things by storm, but also leaving not a few of their number behind. The patient, thus lifted above his distresses by methods that seemed unorthodox, particularly in those cases in which he had most earnestly sought for help and submitted to all that his physician's resources could suggest, may quite naturally become a proselyte from his old faith and a fanatic for the new.

Here is surely the physician's opportunity, for is it not his duty and his privilege to discover wherein lies the help that came to his patient and what was the character of the need he could not supply? It is the ancient soul-hunger of the race, that has manifested itself through all its records and far back into

the vast periods of time before history began, which ever clamors for recognition.

That such recognition is not given as freely as it should, may be defended by the fact that we are ever inclined to lose sight of the horizon in the pursuit of the particular and the investigation of so many subjects of absorbing interest, multiplying every succeeding year, most naturally lures us into the hope that more and more shall we be able to deal with all disorders of humanity specifically. That we shall eventually be able to do so with *specific* disorders, there is little doubt, but the great source of error lies in the incontrovertible fact that man is always something more than his body—he has in addition to his body an incorporeal part which we call his soul!

And here our profession is too often dodging the issue, not wilfully by any means, but confused by the pressure of so many things that are material and tangible and objective, that the wonder is not so great that we should too fondly believe the solution of human ills to be wholly a material one.

This then is the rock upon which we founder in all such cases wherein the spiritual needs of the patient are not recognized and met, either without or in conjunction with all the material aids our art and science is now so richly bringing to bear.

CHAPTER XXII

THE HOPE OF THE VARIANT

Man is endowed with something within him which has lifted him above the beast and given him a consciousness. In the measure wherein he knows that he possesses this consciousness is he the more nearly allied to that unknown source of his being which, among many other names, is called God or the Creative Power. In the degree to which he has a consciousness, an objective self, to that degree does he become responsible. Only that creature which dwells in the lower consciousness, the subjective, is excused from this responsibility. The moment that a being has developed far enough along the scale to be aware of itself, that moment does this awareness, this consciousness, become a factor in its welfare that insists upon being reckoned with. To neglect it is futile and always disastrous.

Man is man as the result of a progressive growth away from the lowest organism, and with the slow budding of his higher nature he enters into the realm of a higher world wherein the expanding consciousness, the understanding, causes him gradually to recognize the existence of a psychic self. The recognition of this

psychic self becomes eventually his salvation and the means by which he becomes enabled to release this, to him, hitherto unknown resource and, for the first time in his life, really to enter into a larger life,—into the use and the expansion of the potentials of his spiritual being.

The author has had years of experience with that large class of sufferers whose ailments are chronic; who cannot be relieved by the skill of the surgeon, to whom medicine and régime have become things tried and cast aside, and who have traveled to the world's end and back again in the vain attempt to escape from themselves. Their kind suffer and will continue to suffer until the profession awakens to the recognition of the truth that man is more than a mere mechanism, composed of a framework of bone and muscle, with organs to nourish and keep it alive. Therein he is no more than the dog or the ox—who do not suffer as man does because he is so much more than they—but in addition to all that he has in common with other animals he is a conscious being, possessed of a spiritual *faculty* which insists upon being recognized as much as does Newton's Law of Gravity!

We must, of course, acknowledge untold indebtedness to all the marvellous aids we have derived from surgery, from bacteriology, from chemistry and medicine and hygiene and dietetics; more exact knowledge is becoming ours with every year of this marvellous age, wherein the profession is having born unto it truths more pregnant with good to the race, than any

possible knowledge pertaining to material things, and we should be poor indeed did we not accord their rightful place to all these inestimably valuable aids toward the alleviation of human suffering.

All this growing knowledge we need, and shall continue to need to the utmost degree. But when we have applied all these things do we always arrive at our goal? Are there not thousands of sufferers who need something more—something they have not yet had—something without which they continue to pass before our eyes as unhappy and suffering fellow creatures, misunderstood by ourselves who should know better, by their friends who too often look at them askance and think them queer, and, most of all, not understood by themselves!

The writer believes that he would be adjudged by his profession as being far removed from any taint of the therapeutic nihilism prevalent in this generation. Surely we need all the aids we have for the alleviation of human suffering, and can afford to scorn no known means of relief. But then, after all these things have been done, it remains that we shall recognize that the patient may be as ill in his mind, in his character and in his soul as ever he might be in his body, and that such suffering needs the larger help—the development of and the recognition of his spiritual resources.

What are these resources? They proceed from the recognition of the truth that a man may suffer because he has become too conscious of himself—because his consciousness has become diverted from its legitimate

occupation with people and things and principles towards the excessive perception of pain, of discomfort, of unhappiness, of sleeplessness, of something of which he is aware of which he should not be aware. His coordination has become incoordination, he is perceptive of that which properly belongs to the domain of the subconscious. But he can be taught just what this means. He need have only ordinary intelligence to this end. He already has more than what we call intelligence—he is in himself the repository of an inherent impulse towards wellness which may be taught to respond to wholesome suggestion and re-education and to answer to the proper aids like a released spring.

Let us be quite clear upon this point because it is not the physician alone who gets the patient well. It is the physician who may be able to apply the aids—that *pressure* which follows the release of the spring—but it is always the fact that it is a pressure from within of the instinctive tendency to save itself—that saves.

It would appear that our profession,—the art and science which is devoted to the relief of suffering humanity,—is in the same danger that all other branches of human knowledge at times encounter in the course of their development; the danger of an eclipse of the wider horizon in the intentness of the pursuit of the microscopic; the danger of forgetting that there is a psychic or spiritual, in the investigation of the material.

Surely we need to pursue all investigations in the

laboratory to their ultimate manifestations, and to ignore no least new ray of light that brings its tribute to making the sum total of any given line of research of ever increasing value. We should be poor indeed today were we to be deprived of the blessings that modern exact and aseptic surgery bestows upon us. The triumphs of the bacteriological laboratory have opened up the world of the infinitely little, and constitute one of the greatest monuments to human progress the world has ever known, saving today literally millions of lives that would otherwise merely have succumbed to human ignorance.

Of these things thus learned—and they are learned at times even at the price of the martyrdom of its devotees, we avail ourselves gratefully and reverently, but do we feel today that we have enough—that our equipment is complete? What can we do with the so-called neurasthenic; with the psychasthenic; with the chronic sufferer who is out of harmony with self and with humanity and with the universe? We have tried with him many things and with some of these we may have been enabled to do him good. We may possibly do much for the correction of his digestion which in most instances will be found at fault. There may be many things to do for the relief of his body-habit, since faulty anatomical poise is one of the most frequent handicaps. We should correct his habit of living and working and playing and resting. But then, if he is still far from happy or comfortable or useful or contented; if he continues to be depressed, or despond-

ent, or only half alive; if he still is a source of concern (and often discomfort) to his family and his friends; if in consequence of his despair and discouragement his life has become a negative thing and he is at times even led to throw it away, what shall we do?

There are occasions when, because of the disease and destruction of his tissues, we are powerless. There are other times when, with the limited understanding we yet have, we may not know whether there is actual organic disintegration or an unsolvable symptom and function complex, where we are again powerless to help, though we take such defeats most unwillingly. Thanks to all the great light that has been shed by the inspired work of the present and past generations of patient, devoted searchers after truth, these occasions of defeat are growing steadily less.

But of all these men and women who are unhappy and who suffer, who have no acute disease and who will not and need not die, and to whom often the physician himself, or his wife and so many of his friends belong,—have they no right to have their peculiar needs considered? Since they do not suffer from surgical or insuperable anatomical defects and are often even well nourished and actually earning their daily bread or doing their duty by their family and society (hard as it may be for them)—are not these entitled to such special relief as their peculiar case may claim?

How much are we really doing for this great majority, how much of the same kind of earnest investigation and concentrated analysis are we giving them

that we would give to the anxious consideration of the number of grains of proteids or carbohydrates a man happens to be able to live upon? Our race has lived for countless ages, up to the present time, and has maintained itself in times of largesse and famine upon all kinds of food. It has had excess of proteids and it has lived wholly upon grains or coarser vegetable substances, and what the individual took into his economy over his needs was disposed of and what he didn't get that he should have had he got along without for the time being—all these things being taken care of by a wiser chemistry than any he himself could devise.

We have all been fascinated by the lure of the promises held out to us by painstaking laboratory investigations into the chemical and biological phenomena of health and disease. We have often felt that doors might soon be opened by whose greater light we might at last be enabled to proceed with rule and scales and unswerving chemical tests, towards the relief and simplification of all our sufferings. Immeasurable knowledge we have already gained and hope burns brightly in justification. Many diseases, hitherto merely blindly acknowledged as pathological states, which were as blindly and helplessly treated, have been reduced in consequence of the laboratory to exact and definite causes for which already in many cases exact and definite remedial measures have been found.

Tuberculosis, tetanus, rabies, anthrax, the sleeping sickness, diphtheria, small pox, bubonic plague, the

hookworm disease, typhoid and others, have already lost many of their terrors, and become classed among the enemies of man as those that are specific,—and against which specific measures may be, almost wholly, successfully taken.

We all live in the fervent hope that as great triumphs are still awaiting us; and in innumerable laboratories throughout the world, patient pioneers of medical science are devoting their lives to the relentless search for the cause of cancer, one of the few remaining and baffling citadels of our enemy against which we still appear to be helpless. Doubtless this, too, will be overcome and many other things besides. But shall we then have overcome human suffering; will there be no longer that great army of chronically unwell and unhappy people who are unfit for the reasonable enjoyment of life and duty?

Are we possibly led into the error, not so unnaturally it is true in view of the many mysteries exact medical science has cleared up, of thinking that for them, too, there will come an emancipation through the miracle-working solvent of the laboratory?

It is possible, indeed probable, that there will still come to us more triumphs, further simplifications, greater reductions to more exact recognition of the nature of “chronic” suffering,—always in so far as they may be due to *specific* causes pertaining to the *body*—but never, so long as man is a being that is more than mere body—can there come relief to a “mind diseased,” unless we treat it in a manner adapted to

its own peculiar needs—in a manner that is adapted to its own nature.

Do we not know how many disturbances of mind and body may come to us in an instant through the gateway of an emotion! It need have been none other than a perfectly well man whose face may become suddenly blanched with fear, whose heart will sink within him, and who will turn with repugnance from his food, at the receipt of evil tidings. Does not anxiety over a loved one's life often paralyze all effort and act as a poisonous drug upon every spring of energy?

Let new hope and courage come to him who is prostrated with despair, and how well we know the quickening power, the lighted countenance, the sudden release of energy, the opening of what would appear to be the very floodgates of renewed vitality! How marvellously does energy return to the shipwrecked sailor in the life-boat, exhausted by fatigue and despair, at the sight of the rescuing sail!

What is it that happens at such crisis-times that can produce such extremes of despair and exaltation, between a powerlessness that would soon end in death and an influx of vigor that becomes almost invincible? It is but the miracle of the marvellous force of the lifting spirit of the man, exerting its mysterious influence upon his body. It is the liberation of this force, which we may call the "faith factor," that may lift him out of the pit from which our material resources may not avail to raise him, and it is the inhibition of it, which

we may not be able to lift, that may cause him to become submerged.

What has sustained man in war and famine but his Ideal, the devotion to the cause for which he was striving! It was the thought of his family, of his tribe, of his God that lifted him out of the consciousness of himself and enabled him to be sustained. The Pilgrim Fathers, the Crusaders, the fanatical followers of Islam, holy wars, the uprising of tribes and nations to the defense of their faith or their country; what are all these things but the manifestation of a force that moves more powerfully than all the obstacles that mere suffering of body may interpose,—the sign of the presence within of a power that dominates all else,—the mighty moving within of the Spirit in man!

When we enter the presence of the sick we must bring with us first of all, another presence,—the presence of the well. We must have ever a thought to the vital importance of displacing despair and discouragement with hope and confidence. The embers of fear are always smouldering;—we must have in our constant possession, at our instantaneous service, the instant perception of the need that such smouldering fire needs quick extinction,—long before we feel of the sick man's pulse!

Do we not know that blessed type of doctor, whose mere coming into the sick-room often lifts the spirits and the courage of the patient more than all his medicines? Alas! perhaps we also know him who leaves the patient just a little worse for his presence,

because he did not know that his patient had also a spiritual factor in his make-up that was entitled to recognition,—as well as the fever in his body! What is it that lifts? What does the physician strive to awaken in his patient in his battle with what are so often unknown quantities? It is faith, and in faith lies the greatest lever wherewith to release the mysterious action of that unknown quantity, the “vital factor,” upon the functions of the body.

With all that science can do with its magnificent attainments in the care of the body, and all the light that psychology has thrown upon the working of the mind,—with all this grand equipment for the welfare of the human race,—man asks for still more. What is it that lifts? A dominant need has existed since the history of mankind has been a written record,—a demand which has made a golden thread in the whole world’s web,—revealing itself under manifold conditions, hidden by human limitations, by superstitions, by fanatical puerilities,—has never been destroyed; the one great universal faculty which has refused to be ignored; the most universally dominant of all the faculties given to the keeping of man by his Creator.

It is the crowning conviction of the author’s life that the resolute use of the *faith faculty* by the human soul, regarding whatever may appeal to it as the highest and best ideals of life, will cause it to become more like unto what it values. From this vantage ground of a higher state of consciousness, the soul may view

the stress of earthly life with undaunted courage and also see a new horizon, before unrecognized, and by what it has seen learn to trust the unseen.

No man is able to live up to the fulness of the measure that is possible, unless he strives to set free the potentials that lie in the Spirit within. Every man is only more or less well; every man has the right, and every man can learn, to release unto himself an infinitely more abundant measure of usefulness and happiness. It is futile to attempt to reduce human life to mathematical or chemical equivalents. All systems of measurement fail unless we take into account the vital or spiritual factor, call it what we will,—that something which the laboratory has never yet succeeded in making tangible to our ordinary senses—but which we all know to be in the world, moving, indeed, within our own hearts and souls!

What then is the Hope of the Variant? It lies in a bending of all his deflections towards the straight line of wiser living, employing *all* of the faculties that go to make up the tripod of his equipment. And who must be his helper? He must be that physician who knows and admits that there is a plane of suffering beyond the helps of mere medicinal or textbook aids and who, merely because he happens to be at the end of such resources, shall not give to a sufferer the hopelessness due to his own inadequacy by saying "There is nothing the matter with you" or, "Forget yourself and go to work!"

He should let a suffering human being appear before

his consciousness as a task to be reverently met, as a direct and insistent claim upon all that is fine and noble and divine within himself. If he himself is possessed of a constant recognition of the value of the momentous truths that have touched the soul of man,—ever since in the dim dawn of history he began to recognize the need of “Something outside ourselves which maketh for righteousness,”—he will be seeking to impart to his patient, along with all that his medical science may give, the recognition of a vast, living, cooperative Force whose source lies in the Creative Energy itself. The constant, immanent presence of this subtle energy should be taught to every ailing soul; it should be interwoven in every direction and with every hour of effort for health.

What physician of experience, who bends every faculty to the single purpose of bringing help to the sufferer, has not felt the sudden flash of intuition that shone out of darkness, that enabled him to see the way? What strange illumination, what sudden crystallization of thought, what marvelous perceptive insight has come, which in less earnest moments would seem miraculous! “Not of the clod” are the flashes of wisdom we revere,—and every sick soul and body needs to be helped to release this more rarefied spiritual atmosphere; he deserves the guidance which will help him to make the recognition of a resourceful God an inspiration and a sustaining power, which will surely bridge many a stormy flood of misery. He needs to use the Faith Faculty!

The physician for those who suffer in mind, spirit and body must be a recognizer and an acknowledger. He must always be one who stands upon the plane of original research. He must forge out for himself *unborrowed* and clearly defined convictions, and then fearlessly make adaptation and application; his results often will exceed his greatest expectations.

Indeed it will be given him to feel at times, with great humility of soul, that, haltingly and stumblingly it is true, he has nevertheless succeeded in invoking and liberating a mighty power which shall seem to him a veritable Presence—a Spirit, moving, before his awed perceptions.

Though the variations of the Variant are infinite, still more infinite is the *Provision* given for the needs of the creature, and this short summary of interpretations, methods and results is offered to all those whose interests and sympathies are concerned, with the firm and ever-increasing assurance that there is a joyous HOPE FOR THE VARIANT.

“Crooked and warped am I, and I would fain
Straighten myself by Thy right line again.”

TRENCH,

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